

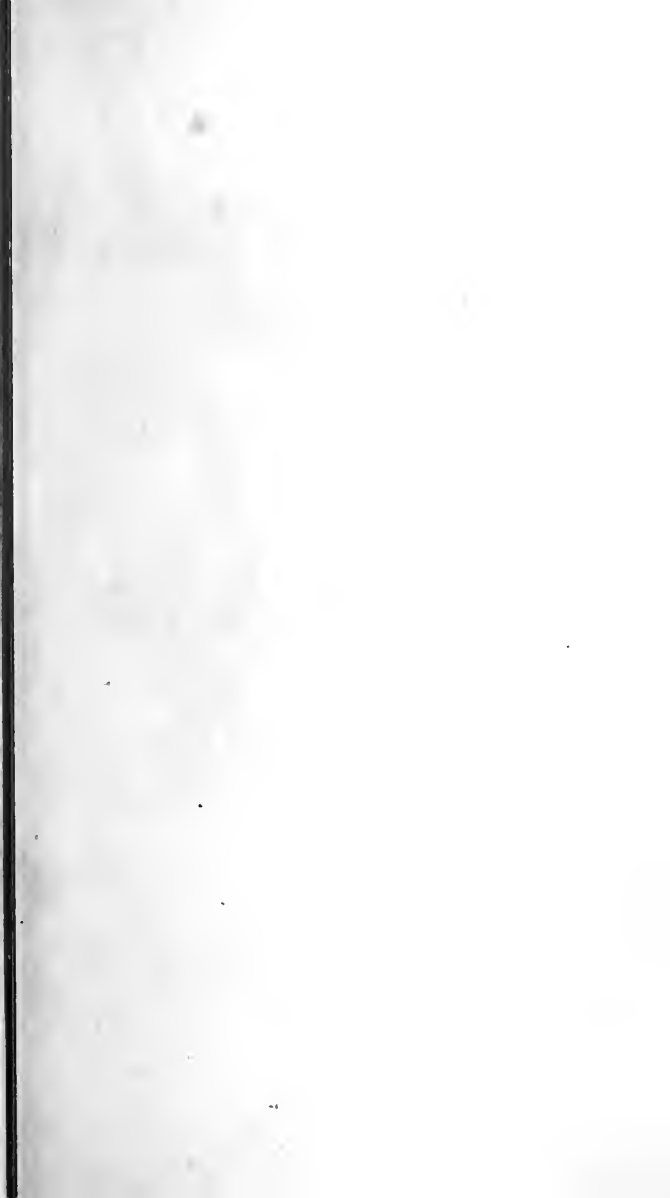


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EDINBURGH ILLUSTRATED EDITION) OF THE
POEMS AND SONGS OF ROBERT BURNS
COMPLETE · CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED
NOTES, GLOSSARIES, AND INDEX BY W. SCOTT
DUGLAS · AND LIFE BY PROFESSOR NICHOL ·
WITH TWELVE PHOTOGRAVURES AFTER
DRAWINGS BY MARSHALL BROWN · IN
FOUR VOLUMES







ROBERT BURNS

POEMS AND
SONGS COMPLETE

VOLUME
FIRST



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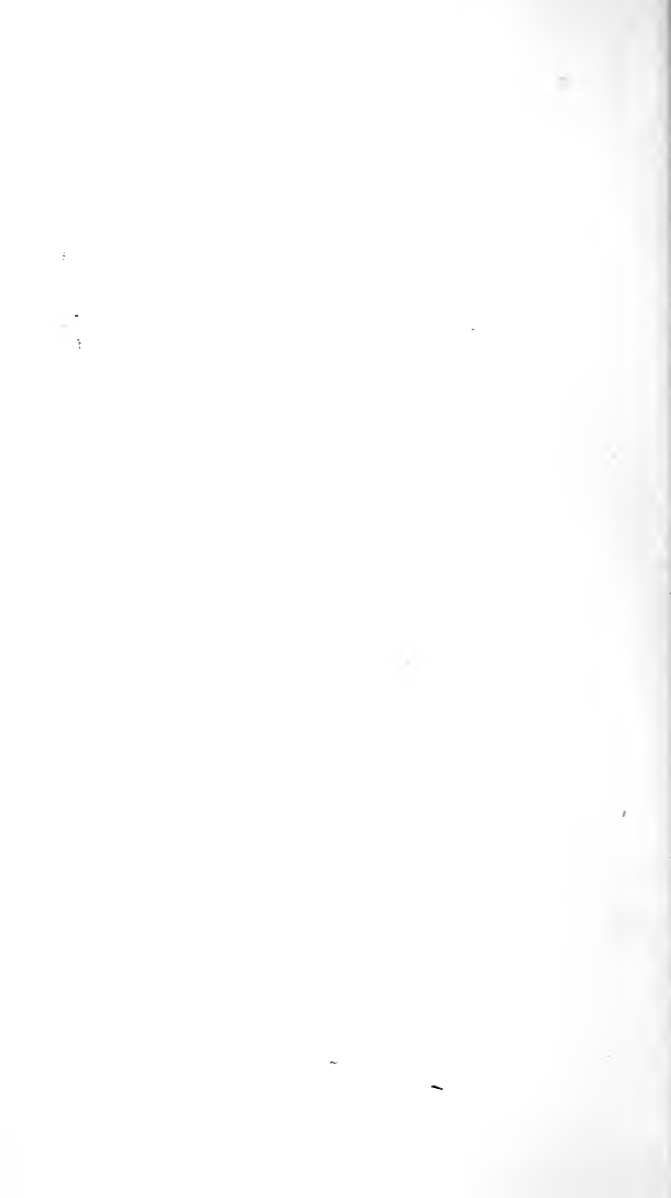
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P R E F A C E.

THIS new popular Edition of the Poetical Works of ROBERT BURNS has peculiar claims on public attention.

It seems now to be universally allowed that Burns, as an author, and as a subject of instructive and deeply interesting biographical study—chiefly, as mirrored in his own writings—is entitled to stand in the foremost rank of British literature. To enable this study to be satisfactorily accomplished, it is necessary that his poems be presented unabridged and untampered with, and arranged in chronological order, the date of each composition being recorded. A very considerable number of the author's undoubted productions now, for the first time, appear in a popular edition, and great diligence has been exercised to obtain a collation of the poems with the original manuscripts so as to render this edition complete and satisfactory.



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P R E F A C E.

(To the Original Edition, Kilmarnock, 1786).

The following trifles are not the production of the Poet, who, with all the advantages of learned art, and perhaps amid the elegancies and idlenesses of upper life, looks down for a rural theme, with an eye to Theocrites or Virgil. To the Author of this, these and other celebrated names (their countrymen) are, in their original languages, 'a fountain shut up, and a book sealed.' Unacquainted with the necessary requisites 'or commencing Poet by rule, he sings the sentiments and manners he felt and saw in himself and his rustic compeers around him, in his and their native language. Though a Rhymer from his earliest years, at least from the earliest impulses of the softer passions, it was not till very lately that the applause, perhaps the partiality, of Friendship, awakened his vanity so far as to make him think anything of his was worth showing ; and none of the following works were ever composed with a view to the press. To amuse himself with the little creations of his own fancy, amid the toil and fatigues of a laborious life ; to transcribe the various feelings, the loves, the griefs, the hopes, the fears, in his own breast ; to find some

kind of counterpoise to the struggles of a world, always an alien scene, a task uncouth to the poetical mind ; these were his motives for courting the Muses, and in these he found Poetry to be its own reward.

Now that he appears in the public character of an Author, he does it with fear and trembling. So dear is fame to the rhyming tribe, that even he, an obscure, nameless Bard, shrinks aghast at the thought of being branded as ‘An impertinent blockhead, obtruding his nonsense on the world ; and because he can make a shift to jingle a few doggerel Scotch rhymes together, looks upon himself as a Poet of no small consequence forsooth.’

It is an observation of that celebrated Poet*—whose divine Elegies do honor to our language, our nation, and our species—that ‘Humility has depressed many a genius to a hermit, but never raised one to fame.’ If any Critic catches at the word *genius*, the Author tells him, once for all, that he certainly looks upon himself as possest of some poetic abilities, otherwise his publishing in the manner he has done, would be a manœuvre below the worst character which, he hopes, his worst enemy will ever give him : but to the genius of a Ramsay, or the glorious dawns of the poor, unfortunate Ferguson, he, with equal unaffected sincerity, declares that, even in his highest pulse of vanity, he has not the most distant pre-

* Shenstone.

tensions. These two justly admired Scotch Poets he has often had in his eye in the following pieces ; but rather with a view to kindle at their flame, than for servile imitation.

To his Subscribers the Author returns his most sincere thanks. Not the mercenary bow over a counter, but the heart-throbbing gratitude of the Bard, conscious how much he is indebted to Benevolence and Friendship for gratifying him if he deserves it, in that dearest wish of every poetic bosom—to be distinguished. He begs his readers, particularly the Learned and the Polite, who may honor him with a perusal, that they will make every allowance for Education and Circumstances of Life : but if, after a fair, candid, and impartial criticism, he shall stand convicted of Dulness and Nonsense, let him be done by, as he would in that case do by others—let him be condemned without mercy, to contempt and oblivion.

DEDICATION.

(*First Edinburgh Edition, 1787.*)

TO THE
NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
CALEDONIAN HUNT.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

A Scottish Bard, proud of the name, and whose highest ambition is to sing in his Country's service—where shall he so properly look for patronage as to the illustrious Names of his native Land; those who bear the honours and inherit the virtues of their Ancestors? The Poetic Genius of my Country found me as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha—at the *plough*, and threw her inspiring mantle over me. She bade me sing the loves, the joys, the rural scenes and rural pleasures of my natal Soil, in my native tongue: I tuned my wild, artless notes, as she inspired. She whispered me to come to this ancient metropolis of Caledonia, and lay my Songs under your honoured protection: I now obey her dictates.

Though much indebted to your goodness, I do not approach you, my Lords and Gentlemen, in the usual style of dedication, to thank you for past favours; that path is so hackneyed by prostituted Learning, that honest Rusticity is ashamed of it. Nor do I present this Address with the venal soul of a servile Author, looking for a continuation of those favours: I was bred to the Plough, and am independent. I come to claim the common Scottish name with you, my illustrious Countrymen; and to tell the world that I glory in the title. I come to congratulate my Country that the blood of her ancient heroes still runs uncontaminated; and that from your courage, knowledge, and public spirit, she may expect protection, wealth, and liberty. In the last place, I come to proffer my warmest wishes to the Great Fountain of Honour, the Monarch of the Universe, for your welfare and happiness.

When you go forth to waken the Echoes, in the ancient and favourite amusement of your Forefathers, may Pleasure ever be of your party; and may Social-joy await your return! When harassed in courts or camps with the jostlings of bad men and bad measures, may the honest consciousness of injured Worth attend your return to your native Seats; and may Domestic Happiness, with a smiling welcome, meet you at your gates! May Corruption shrink at your kindling, indignant glance; and may tyranny in the Ruler and

licentiousness in the People equally find you an **inex-**
orable foe !

I have the honour to be, with the sincerest grati-
tude and highest respect,

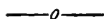
MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

Your most devoted humble Servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *April* 4, 1787.

POEMS AND SONGS.



SONG—HANDSOME NELL.

Tune—"I am a man unmarried."

I never had the least thought or inclination of turning Poet till I got once cartily in love, and then *rhyme* and *song* were, in a manner, the spontaneous language of my heart. The following composition was the first of y performances. It is, indeed, very puerile and silly; but I am always eased with it, as it recalls to my mind those happy days when my heart as yet honest, and my tongue was sincere.—*Commonplace Book, Aug.*
83.

O ONCE I lov'd a bonie lass,
Aye, and I love her still;
And whilst that virtue warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.

As bonie lasses I hae seen,
And mony full as braw;*
But, for a modest gracefu' mien,
The like I never saw.

A bonie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the e'e;
But, without some better qualities,
She's no a lass for me.

But Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet,
And what is best of a',

* handsome.

Her reputation is complete,
And fair without a flaw.

She dresses ay sae clean and neat,
Both decent and genteel ;
And then there's something in her gait
Gars* ony dress look weel.

A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart ;
But it's innocence and modesty
That polishes the dart.

'Tis this in Nelly pleases me,
'Tis this enchants my soul ;
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without controul.

[Burns delighted to refer to the incident that gave rise to these juvenile verses:—Nelly Kirkpatrick, daughter of a blacksmith in the neighbourhood of Mount Oliphant, inspired the song in the harvest-field, in the autumn of 1773, when he was yet under fifteen years old. Speaking "Nell" in his autobiography, he says:—"Among other love-inspiring qualities, she sang sweetly; and it was her favourite reel to which I attempt giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme."]

SONG—O TIBBIE, I HAE SEEN THE DAY.

Tune—"Invercauld's Reel, or Strathspey."

Chor.—O Tibbie, I hae seen the day,
Ye wadna been sae shy ;
For laik o' gear† ye lightly me,
But, trowth, I care na by.

Yestreen I met you on the moor,
Ye spak na, but gaed by like stoure ; ‡

* makes.

† lack of money.

‡ dust in motion.

Ye geck * at me because I'm poor,
But fient † a hair care I.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

When comin hame on Sunday last,
Upon the road as I cam past,
Ye snufft an gae your head a cast—
But trowth I care't na by.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,
Because ye hae the name o' clink, ‡
That ye can please me at a wink,
Whene'er ye like to try.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

But sorrow tak' him that's sae mean,
Altho' his pouch o' coin were clean,
Wha follows ony saucy quean,
That looks sae proud and high.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

Altho' a lad were e'er sae smart,
If that he want the yellow dirt,
Ye'll cast your head anither airt, §
And answer him fu' dry.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

But if he hae the name o' gear,
Ye'll fasten to him like a brier,
Tho' hardly he, for sense or lear, ||
Be better than the kye.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

But, Tibbie, lass, tak' my advice :
Your daddie's gear maks you sae nice ;

* toss the head.

§ direction.

† a petty oath.

|| education.

‡ cash.

The deil a ane wad spier * your price,
 Were ye as poor as I.
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

There lives a lass beside yon park,
 I'd rather hae her in her sark,
 Than you wi' a' your thousand mark ;
 That garst† you look sae high.
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

[According to Mrs Begg, the poet's sister, the heroine of this song was Tibbie Stein, who lived at Little Hill, a farm marching with that Lochlie.]

SONG—I DREAM'D I LAY.

These two stanzas I composed when I was seventeen, and are among the oldest of my printed pieces.—*Glenriddell Notes in Cromek.*

I DREAM'D I lay where flowers were springing
 Gaily in the sunny beam ;
 List'ning to the wild birds singing,
 By a falling crystal stream :
 Straight the sky grew black and daring ;
 Thro' the wood the whirlwinds rave ;
 Trees with aged arms were warring,
 O'er the swelling drumlie wave.

Such was my life's deceitful morning,
 Such the pleasures I enjoy'd :
 But lang or noon, loud tempests storming,
 A' my flowery bliss destroy'd.
 Tho' fickle fortune has deceiv'd me—
 She promis'd fair, and perform'd but ill,
 Of mony a joy and hope bereav'd me—
 I bear a heart shall support me still.

* inquire.

† makes.

SONG—IN THE CHARACTER OF A RUINED FARMER.

Tune—"Go from my window, Love, do."

THE sun he is sunk in the west,
All creatures retirèd to rest,
While here I sit, all sore beset,
 With sorrow, grief, and woe :
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O !

The prosperous man is asleep,
Nor hears how the whirlwinds sweep ;
But Misery and I must watch
 The surly tempest blow :
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O !

There lies the dear [partner] of my breast ; [mate]
Her cares for a moment at rest :
Must I see thee, my youthful pride,
 Thus brought so very low !
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O !

There lie my sweet [babies] in her arms ; [babes]
No anxious fear their [little] hearts alarms ; [delete]
But for their sake my heart does ache,
 With many a bitter throe :
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O !

I once was by Fortune carest :
I once could relieve the distress :
Now life's poor [support,] hardly earn'd, [pittance]
 My fate will scarce bestow :
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O !

No comfort, no comfort I have !
How welcome to me were the grave !

But then my wife and children dear—
O, whither would they go !
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O !

O whither, O [whither] shall I turn ! [where]
 All friendless, forsaken, forlorn !
 For, in this world, Rest or Peace
 I never more shall know !
 And it's O, fickle Fortune, O !

[The "ruined farmer" here is undoubtedly meant as a presentment of the author's father bravely struggling to weather out his hard fate at Mount Oliphant. As a pathetic dirge, it is the best illustration of the following passage in the poet's autobiography:—

"The farm proved a ruinous bargain. . . . My father was advanced in life when he married. I was the eldest of seven children, and he, worn out by early hardship, was unfit for labour. My father's spirit was soon irritated, but not easily broken. There was a freedom in his lease in two years more; and to weather these two years we retrenched expenses," &c.]

TRAGIC FRAGMENT.

In my early years, nothing less would serve me than courting the Trag Muse. I was, I think, about eighteen or nineteen when I sketched the outlines of a tragedy forsooth; but the bursting of a cloud of family misfortunes, which had for some time threatened us, prevented my farther progress. In those days I never wrote down anything; so, except a speech or two, the whole has escaped my memory. The following, which I more distinctly remember, was an exclamation from a great character—great occasional instances of generosity, and daring at times in villainies. He supposed to meet with a child of misery, and exclaims to himself—

ALL villain as I am—a damnèd wretch,
A hardened, stubborn, unrepenting sinner,
Still my heart melts at human wretchedness ;
And with sincere but unavailing sighs
I view the helpless children of distress :
With tears indignant I behold the oppressor
Rejoicing in the honest man's destruction,
Whose unsubmitting heart was all his crime.—

Ev'n you, ye hapless crew ! I pity you ;
Ye, whom the seeming good think sin to pity ;
Ye poor, despised, abandoned vagabonds,
Whom Vice, as usual, has turn'd o'er to ruin.
Oh ! but for friends and interposing Heaven,
I had been driven forth like you forlorn,
'The most detested, worthless wretch among you !
O injured God ! Thy goodness has endow'd me
With talents passing most of my compeers,
Which I in just proportion have abused—
As far surpassing other common villains
As Thou in natural parts has given me more.

[The "human wretchedness" deplored in this pathetic soliloquy was that of his father's suffering household at Mount Oliphant, which the poet has so touchingly recorded in his autobiography.]

THE TARBOLTON LASSES.

If ye gae up to yon hill-tap,
Ye'll there see bonie Peggy ;
She kens her father is a laird,
And she forsooth's a leddy.

There Sophy tight, a lassie bright,
Besides a handsome fortune :
Wha canna win her in a night,
Has little art in courtin.

Gae down by Faile, and taste the ale,
And tak a look o' Mysie ;
She's dour* and din,† a deil within,
But aiblins ‡ she may please ye.

If she be shy, her sister try,
Ye'll may be fancy Jenny ;

* sulky.

† ill-complexioned.

‡ perhaps.

If ye'll dispense wi' want o' sense—
She kens hersel she's bonie.

As ye gae up by yon hillside,
Speer in for bonie Bessy ;
She'll gie ye a beck, and bid ye light,
And handsomely address ye.

There's few sae bonie, nane sae guid,
In a' King George' dominion ;
If ye should doubt the truth o' this—
It's Bessy's ain opinion !

AH, WOE IS ME, MY MOTHER DEAR.

Paraphrase of Jeremiah, 15th Chap., 10th verse.

AH, woe is me, my Mother dear !
A man of strife ye've born me :
For sair contention I maun bear ;
They hate, revile, and scorn me.

I ne'er could lend on bill or band,
That five per cent. might blest me ;
And borrowing, on the tither hand,
The de'il a ane wad trust me.

Yet I, a coin-denièd wight,
By Fortune quite discarded ;
Ye see how I am, day and night,
By lad and lass blackguarded !

[Burns in 1785 records the remark—"I don't well know what is the reason of it, but somehow or other though I am, when I have a mind, pretty generally beloved ; yet I never could get the art of commanding *respect*." Again, referring to his early boyhood, he says in his autobiography :—"At those years, I was by no means a favourite with anybody." David Sillar, speaking of Burns in 1781, says :—"His social disposition easily procured him acquaintances ; but a certain satirical seasoning, while it set the rustic circle in a roar, was not unaccompanied by its kindred attendant,—suspicious fear."

MONTGOMERIE'S PEGGY.

ALTHO' my bed were in yon muir,
Amang the heather, in my plaidie ;
Yet happy, happy would I be,
Had I my dear Montgomerie's Peggy.

When o'er the hill beat surly storms,
And winter nights were dark and rainy ;
I'd seek some dell, and in my arms
I'd shelter dear Montgomerie's Peggy.

Were I a Baron proud and high,
And horse and servants waiting ready ;
Then a' 'twad gie o' joy to me,—
The sharin't with Montgomerie's Peggy.

[“Montgomerie's Peggy” was the poet's deity for six or eight months. Mrs Begg, in her notes regarding this affair, says :—“The lady was housekeeper at Coilsfield House ; my brother Robert had met her frequently at Arbuthnot Mill ; they sat in the same church, and contracted an intimacy together ; but she was engaged to another before ever they met. So, on her part, it was nothing but amusement, and on Burns' part, little more, from the way he speaks of it.”]

THE PLOUGHMAN'S LIFE.

As I was a-wand'ring ae morning in spring,
I heard a young ploughman sae sweetly to sing ;
And as he was singin', thir words he did say,—
There's nae life like the ploughman's in the month o'
sweet May.

He lav'rock in the morning she'll rise frae her nest,
And mount i' the air wi' the dew on her breast,
And wi' the merry ploughman she'll whistle and sing,
And at night she'll return to her nest back again.

THE RONALDS OF THE BENNALS.

IN Tarbolton, ye ken, there are proper young men,
And proper young lasses and a', man ;
But ken ye the Ronalds that live in the Bennals,
They carry the gree* frae them a', man.

Their father's a laird, and weel he can spare't,
Braid money to tocher† them a', man ;
To proper young men, he'll clink‡ in the hand
Gowd guineas a hunder or twa, man.

There's ane they ca' Jean, I'll warrant ye've seen
As bonie a lass or as braw,§ man ;
But for sense and guid taste she'll vie wi' the best,
And a conduct that beautifies a', man.

The charms o' the min', the langer they shine,
The mair admiration they draw, man ;
While peaches and cherries, and roses and lilies,
They fade and they wither awa, man.

If ye be for Miss Jean, tak this frae a frien',
A hint o' a rival or twa, man ;
The Laird o' Blackbyre wad gang through the fire,
If that wad entice her awa, man.

The Laird o' Braehead has been on his speed,
For mair than a towmond|| or twa, man ;
The Laird o' the Ford will straught on a board,
If he canna get her at a', man.

Then Anna comes in, the pride o' her kin,
The boast of our bachelors a', man :

* pre-eminence.

§ fine.

† marriage-portion.

|| twelvemonth.

‡ count.

Sae sonsy * and sweet, sae fully complete,
She steals our affections awa, man.

If I should detail the pick and the wale
O' lasses that live here awa, man,
The fau't wad be mine if they didna shine
The sweetest and best o' them a', man.

I lo'e her mysel, but darena weel tell,
My poverty keeps me in awe, man ;
For making o' rhymes, and working at times,
Does little or naething at a', man.

Yet I wadna choose to let her refuse,
Nor hae't in her power to say na, man :
For though I be poor, unnoticed, obscure,
My stomach's as proud as them a', man.

Though I canna ride in weel-booted pride,
And flee o'er the hills like a craw, man,
I can haud up my head wi' the best o' the breed,
Though fluttering ever so braw, man.

My coat and my vest, they are Scotch o' the best,
O' pairs o' guid breeks I hae twa, man ;
And stockings and pumps to put on my stumps,
And ne'er a wrang steek in them a', man.

My sarks they are few, but five o' them new,
Twal' hundred,¹ as white as the snaw, man,
A ten-shillings hat, a Holland cravat ;
There are no mony poets sae braw, man.

* buxom.

¹ Woven in a reed of 1200 divisions, and therefore considerably coarser than the "1700 linen" spoken of in *Tam o' Shanter*.

I never had freens weel stockit in means,
 To leave me a hundred or twa, man ;
 Nae weel-tocher'd aunts, to wait on their drants,*
 And wish them in hell for it a', man.

I never was cannie † for hoarding o' money,
 Or claughtin ‡ 't together at a', man ;
 I've little to spend, and naething to lend,
 But deevil a shilling I awe, man.

[The Bennals is a farm in the western part of the parish of Tarbolton, about five miles from Lochlie. The two young women spoken of in this piece were the predominant belles of the district ; being good-looking, fairly educated, and the children of a man reputed wealthy. Gilbert Burns wooed the elder sister, Jeanie Ronald, who refused him on account of his poverty. The younger sister, Anne, appears to have taken the poet's fancy a little ; but he was too proud to afford her the same chance.]

SONG—HERE'S TO THY HEALTH.

HERE'S to thy health, my bonie lass,
 Gude night and joy be wi' thee ;
 I'll come nae mair to thy bower-door,
 To tell thee that I lo'e thee.
 O dinna think, my pretty pink,
 But I can live without thee :
 I vow and swear I dinna care,
 How lang ye look about ye.

Thou'rt ay sae free informing me,
 Thou hast nae mind to marry ;
 I'll be as free informing thee,
 Nae time hae I to tarry :
 I ken thy freens try ilka means
 Frae wedlock to delay thee ;
 Depending on some higher chance,
 But fortune may betray thee.

* long prayers.

† prudent.

‡ grasping.

I ken they scorn my low estate,
But that does never grieve me ;
For I'm as free as any he ;
Sma' siller will relieve me.
I'll count my health my greatest wealth,
Sae lang as I'll enjoy it ;
I'll fear nae scant, I'll bode nae want,
As lang's I get employment.

But far off fowls hae feathers fair,
And, ay until ye try them,
Tho' they seem fair, still have a care ;
They may prove as bad as I am.
But at twel at night, when the moon shines bright,
My dear, I'll come and see thee ;
For the man that loves his mistress weel,
Nae travel makes him weary.

THE LASS OF CESSNOCK BANKS.

ON Cessnock banks a lassie dwells ;
Could I describe her shape and mien ;
Our lasses a' she far excels,
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

She's sweeter than the morning dawn,
When rising Phœbus first is seen ;
And dew-drops twinkle o'er the lawn ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

She's stately like yon youthful ash,
That grows the cowslip braes between,
And drinks the stream with vigour fresh ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

She's spotless like the flow'ring thorn,
With flow'rs so white and leaves so green,
When purest in the dewy morn ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her looks are like the vernal May,
When ev'ning Phœbus shines serene ;
While birds rejoice on every spray ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her hair is like the curling mist,
That climbs the mountain-sides at e'en,
When flow'r-reviving rains are past ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her forehead's like the show'ry bow,
When gleaming sunbeams intervene
And gild the distant mountain's brow ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her cheeks are like yon crimson gem,
The pride of all the flowery scene,
Just opening on its thorny stem ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her bosom's like the nightly snow,
When pale the morning rises keen ;
While hid the murm'ring streamlets flow ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her lips are like yon cherries ripe,
That sunny walls from Boreas screen ;
They tempt the taste and charm the sight ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her teeth are like a flock of sheep,
With fleeces newly washen clean ;

That slowly mount the rising steep ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her breath is like the fragrant breeze,
That gently stirs the blossom'd bean ;
When Phœbus sinks behind the seas ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her voice is like the ev'ning thrush,
That sings on Cessnock banks unseen ;
While his mate sits nestling in the bush ;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish e'en.

But it's not her air, her form, her face,
Tho' matching beauty's fabled queen ;
'Tis the mind that shines in ev'ry grace.
An' chiefly in her rogueish een.

[Burns was passionately in love with the subject of this poem, or "Song of Similes" as it has been called. Her name was Ellison Begbie, her father being a small farmer in Galston parish, and she herself at that time in service with a family who resided near Cessnock water, about two miles north-east from Lochlie. After some intimacy and correspondence with the poet she rejected his suit, and soon married another lover.]

SONG—BONIE PEGGY ALISON.

Tune—"The Braes o' Balquhider."

Chor.—And I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
And I'll kiss thee o'er again ;
And I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
My bonie Peggy Alison.

Ilk care and fear, when thou art near
I ever mair defy them, O !

Young kings upon their hansom throne *
Are no sae blest as I am, O !
And I'll kiss thee yet, yet, &c.

When in my arms, wi' a' thy charms,
I clasp my countless treasure, O !
I seek nae mair o' Heav'n to share
Than sic a moment's pleasure, O !
And I'll kiss thee yet, yet, &c.

And by thy een sae bonie blue,
I swear I'm thine for ever, O !
And on thy lips I seal my vow,
And break it shall I never, O !
And I'll kiss thee yet, yet, &c.

[This and the song which immediately follows (*Mary Morison*), long went wandering in search of the living originals; but no fair damsels nor *sonsie lasses* in the parish of Tarbolton, bearing such names, were ever heard of. As the poet admitted that all his earlier love-songs were the breathings of real passion—a legend of his heart being inscribed on each of them—a “heroine hunt” for the inspirers of them was the eventful result. Gilbert Burns when applied to for information regarding *Mary Morison*, replied that she was also the subject of some light verses, beginning, “And I'll kiss thee yet.” This clue suggested that the poet had simply disguised these juvenile productions by altering the names. Mrs Begg's information regarding her brother's passion for the *Lass of Cessnock Banks*—Ellison, or Alison Begbie, started the natural idea that Burns must have attempted to weave her name into some snatch of song. Her surname, however, being so very prosaic and untunable, what was a poor poet to do? His object could be attained only by compromise, and that might be accomplished by transposing *Alison Begbie* into “Peggy Alison,”—a very euphonious by-name indeed! Let us take for granted that such was the case, and then it follows, that *Ellison Begbie* was also the inspirer of its charming companion-song, *Mary Morison*.

* “Hansom” means the *first fruit* of an achievement, or of a particular field, or season: hence a gift at New-Year time is so called. The term “maiden throne” would precisely explain the poet's phrase here.

SONG—MARY MORISON.

O MARY, at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour !
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor :
How blythely wad I bide the stoure,*
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw :
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,†
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd, and said among them a',
"Ye are na Mary Morison."

Oh, Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die ?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee ?
If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown ;
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison

[Hazlitt says of this lyric—"Of all the productions of Burns, the pathetic and serious love-songs which he has left behind him, in the manner of old ballads, are perhaps those which take the deepest and most lasting hold of the mind."]

* turmoil.

† gaily dressed.

WINTER: A DIRGE.

As I am what the men of the world, if they knew of such a man, would call a whimsical mortal, I have various sources of pleasure and enjoyment which are in a manner peculiar to myself, or some here and there such other out-of-the-way person. Such is the peculiar pleasure I take in the season of Winter more than the rest of the year. This, I believe, may be partly owing to my misfortunes giving my mind a melancholy cast; but there is something even in the

“Mighty tempest and the hoary waste
Abrupt and deep stretch’d o’er the buried earth,”

which raises the mind to a serious sublimity, favourable to everything great and noble. There is scarcely any earthly object gives me more—I don’t know if I should call it pleasure, but something which exalts me, something which enraptures me, than to walk in the sheltered side of a wood or high plantation in a cloudy winter day, and hear a stormy wind howling among the trees and raving o’er the plain. It is my best season for devotion; my mind is wrapt up in a kind of enthusiasm to *Him* who, in the pompous language of Scripture, “walks on the wings of the wind.” In one of these seasons, just after a tract of misfortunes, I composed the following song.—Tune, “M’Pherson’s Farewell.”—*Common-place Book, April 1784.*

THE wintry west extends his blast,
And hail and rain does blaw;
Or, the stormy north sends driving forth
The blinding sleet and snaw:
While, tumbling brown, the burn comes down,
And roars frae bank to brae;
And bird and beast in covert rest,
And pass the heartless day.

“The sweeping blast, the sky o’ercast,”*
The joyless winter day
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May:
The tempest’s howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join;

* Dr Young — R. B.

The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine !

Thou Power Supreme whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here, firm I rest ; they must be best,
Because they are *Thy* will !
Then all I want—O do Thou grant
This one request of mine !—
Since to *enjoy* Thou dost deny,
Assist me to *resign*.

[The author tells us that he composed this piece at the period referred to in his head-note to the following Prayer, "just after a tract of misfortunes." This corresponds with the tone of his melancholy letter to his father written from Irvine, and also with what he narrates in his autobiography, of his partner in trade having robbed him, and his flax-dressing shop taking fire on New Year's morning, 1782, by which he was left, "like a true poet, not worth a sixpence."]

A PRAYER UNDER THE PRESSURE OF VIOLENT ANGUISH.

There was a certain period of my life that my spirit was broke by repeated losses and disasters, which threatened and indeed affected the utter ruin of my fortune. My body, too, was attacked by that most dreadful distemper, hypochondria, or confirmed melancholy; in this wretched state, the recollection of which makes me yet shudder, I hung my harp on the willow trees, except in some lucid intervals, in one of which I composed the following :—

O THOU Great Being ! what Thou art,
Surpasses me to know ;
Yet sure I am, that known to Thee
Are all Thy works below.

Thy creature here before Thee stands,
All wretched and distress ;
Yet sure those ills that wring my soul
Obey Thy high behest.

Sure Thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath !
O, free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death !

But, if I must afflicted be,
To suit some wise design ;
Then man my soul with firm resolves,
To bear and not repine !

PARAPHRASE OF THE FIRST PSALM

THE man, in life wherever plac'd,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wicked's way,
Nor learns their guilty lore !

Nor from the seat of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God.

That man shall flourish like the trees,
Which by the streamlets grow ;
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.

But he whose blossom buds in guilt
Shall to the ground be cast,
And, like the rootless stubble, tost
Before the sweeping blast.

For why? that God the good adore,
Hath giv'n them peace and rest,
But hath decreed that wicked men
Shall ne'er be truly blest.

THE FIRST SIX VERSES OF THE NINETIETH
PSALM VERSIFIED.

O THOU, the first, the greatest friend
Of all the human race !
Whose strong right hand has ever been
Their stay and dwelling place !

Before the mountains heav'd their heads
Beneath Thy forming hand,
Before this ponderous globe itself,
Arose at Thy command ;

That Pow'r which rais'd and still upholds
This universal frame,
From countless, unbeginning time
Was ever still the same.

Those mighty periods of years
Which seem to us so vast,
Appear no more before Thy sight
Than yesterday that's past.

Thou giv'st the word : Thy creature, man,
Is to existence brought ;
Again Thou say'st, " Ye sons of men,
Return ye into nought !"

Thou layest them, with all their cares,
In everlasting sleep ;
As with a flood Thou tak'st them off
With overwhelming sweep.

They flourish like the morning flow'r,
In beauty's pride array'd ;
But long ere night—cut down, it lies
All wither'd and decay'd.

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

O THOU unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope and fear !
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps I must appear !

If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun—
As something, loudly, in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done—

Thou know'st that Thou hast formed me
With passions wild and strong ;
And list'ning to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
Do Thou, All-Good—for such Thou art—
In shades of darkness hide.

Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have,
But, Thou art good ; and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

[This composition appears, under the date August 1784, in the Commonplace Book, as "A Prayer when fainting fits and other alarming symptoms of a pleurisy, or some other dangerous disorder, which indeed still threaten me, *first* put nature on the alarm."]

STANZAS, ON THE SAME OCCASION.

WHY am I loth to leave this earthly scene ?

Have I so found it full of pleasing charms—
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between—
Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms?

Is it departing pangs my soul alarms ?

Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode ?
For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms :
I tremble to approach an angry God,
And justly smart beneath His sin-avenging rod.

Fain would I say, "Forgive my foul offence !"

Fain promise never more to disobey ;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way ;
Again in folly's path might go astray ;
Again exalt the brute and sink the man ;
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly mercy's plan ?
Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation ran ?

O Thou great Governor of all below !

If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the tumult of the raging sea :
With that controlling pow'r assist ev'n me,
Those headlong furious passions to confine,
For all unfit I feel my pow'rs to be,
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line ;
O, aid me with Thy help, Omnipotence Divine !

[This composition is set down in the poet's Common-place Book immediately following the preceding, and entitled "Misgivings in the Hour of Despondency and Prospect of Death."

Dr John Brown (author of "Rab and his Friends") has introduced an anecdote concerning it in his little book—"Pet Marjorie: a Story of Child Life Fifty Years Ago."]

FICKLE FORTUNE.—“A FRAGMENT.”

THOUGH fickle Fortune has deceived me,
 She promis'd fair and perform'd but ill ;
 Of mistress, friends, and wealth bereav'd me,
 Yet I bear a heart shall support me still.—

I'll act with prudence as far as I'm able,
 But if success I must never find,
 Then come misfortune, I bid thee welcome,
 I'll meet thee with an undaunted mind.

[The poet has set this down in his *Common-place Book*, under date September 1785, and thus remarks:—“The above was an extempore, under the pressure of a heavy train of misfortunes, which indeed threatened to undo me altogether. It was just at the close of that dreadful period mentioned, [when the prayer ‘O Thou great Being,’ was composed,] and though the weather has brightened up a little with me, yet there has always been since, a ‘tempest brewing round me in the grim sky’ of futurity, which I pretty plainly see will some time or other—perhaps ere long—overwhelm me, and drive me into some doleful dell to pine in solitary, squalid wretchedness.”]

RAGING FORTUNE.—FRAGMENT OF SONG.

O RAGING Fortune's withering blast
 Has laid my leaf full low !
 O raging Fortune's withering blast
 Has laid my leaf full low !

My stem was fair, my bud was green,
 My blossom sweet did blow ;
 The dew fell fresh, the sun rose mild,
 And made my branches grow ;

But luckless Fortune's northern storms
 Laid a' my blossoms low,—
 But luckless Fortune's northern storms
 Laid a' my blossoms low !

IMPROMPTU—"I'LL GO AND BE A SODGER."

O WHY the deuce should I repine,
And be an ill foreboder?
I'm twenty-three, and five feet nine,
I'll go and be a sodger!

I gat some gear wi' mickle care,
I held it weel thegither;
But now it's gane, and something mair—
I'll go and be a sodger!

[This is the sequel to the poet's previous penitential bemoanings, and apostrophes to "Fickle Fortune." "Come, stubborn pride and unshrinking resolution!"—he wrote to a lady friend, on receipt of what he deemed ruinous intelligence—"accompany me through this, to me, miserable world! Your friendship I think I can count on, though I should date my letters from a marching regiment. Early in life, and all my life, I reckoned on a recruiting drum as my forlorn hope."]

SONG—"NO CHURCHMAN AM I."

Tune—"Prepare, my dear Brethren."

No churchman am I for to rail and to write,
No statesman nor soldier to plot or to fight,
No sly man of business contriving a snare,
For a big-belly'd bottle's the whole of my care.

The peer I don't envy, I give him his bow;
I scorn not the peasant, tho' ever so low;
But a club of good fellows, like those that are here,
And a bottle like this, are my glory and care.

Here passes the squire on his brother—his horse;
There centum per centum, the cit with his purse;
But see you the *Crown* how it waves in the air?
There a big-belly'd bottle still eases my care.

The wife of my bosom, alas ! she did die ;
For sweet consolation to church I did fly ;
I found that old Solomon provèd it fair,
That a big-belly'd bottle's a cure for all care.

I once was persuaded a venture to make ;
A letter inform'd me that all was to wreck ;
But the pury old landlord just waddl'd up stairs,
With a glorious bottle that ended my cares.

"Life's cares they are comforts" *—a maxim laid down
By the Bard, what d'ye call him ? that wore the black
gown ;
And faith I agree with th' old prig to a hair ;
For a big-belly'd bottle's a heav'n of a care.

A STANZA ADDED IN A MASON LODGE.

Then fill up a bumper and make it o'erflow,
And honours masonic prepare for to throw ;
May ev'ry true Brother of the Compass and Square
Have a big-belly'd bottle when harass'd with care.

[The poet was admitted an apprentice Free Mason in July 1781, just before he proceeded to Irvine.]

BALLAD—MY FATHER WAS A FARMER.

Tune—"The weaver and his shuttle, O."

My father was a farmer upon the Carrick border,
And carefully he bred me in decency and order ;
He bade me act a manly part, though I had ne'er a
farthing ;
For without an honest manly heart, no man was worth
regarding.

* Young's "Night Thoughts."—R. B.

Then out into the world my course I did determine ;
Tho' to be rich was not my wish, yet to be great was
charming :
My talents they were not the worst, nor yet my education :
Resolv'd was I, at least to try, to mend my situation.

In many a way, and vain essay, I courted Fortune's
favour ;
Some cause unseen still stept between, to frustrate each
endeavour ;
Sometimes by foes I was o'erpower'd, sometimes by
friends forsaken ;
And when my hope was at the top, I still was worst
mistaken.

Then sore harass'd, and tir'd at last, with Fortune's vain
delusion,
I dropt my schemes, like idle dreams, and came to this
conclusion :
The past was bad, and the future hid, its good or ill
untrièd ;
But the present hour was in my pow'r, and so I would
enjoy it.

No help, nor hope, nor view had I, nor person to befriend
me ;
So I must toil, and sweat, and moil, and labour to sus-
tain me ;
To plough and sow, to reap and mow, my father bred
me early ;
For one, he said, to labour bred, was a match for Fortune
fairly.

Thus all obscure, unknown, and poor, thro' life I'm
doom'd to wander,
Till down my weary bones I lay in everlasting slumber :

No view nor care, but shun whate'er might breed me
 pain or sorrow ;
I live to-day as well's I may, regardless of to-morrow.

But cheerful still, I am as well as a monarch in his palace,
Tho' Fortune's frown still hunts me down, with all her
 wonted malice :

I make indeed my daily bread, but ne'er can make it
 farther :

But as daily bread is all I need, I do not much regard her.

When sometimes by my labour, I earn a little money,
Some unforeseen misfortune comes gen'rally upon me ;
Mischance, mistake, or by neglect, or my goodnatur'd
 folly :

But come what will, I've sworn it still, I'll ne'er be
 melancholy.

All you who follow wealth and power with unremitting
 ardour,

The more in this you look for bliss, you leave your view
 the farther :

Had you the wealth Potosi boasts, or nations to adore you,
A cheerful honest-hearted clown I will prefer before you.

[The poet describes the above as "a wild rhapsody, miserably deficient in versification, but as the sentiments are the genuine feelings of my heart, for that reason I have a particular pleasure in conning it over."]

JOHN BARLEYCORN : A BALLAD.

This is partly composed on the plan of an old song known by the same name.—*R. B.*

THERE was three kings into the east,
 Three kings both great and high,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
 John Barleycorn should die.

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerful Spring came kindiy on,
And show'rs began to fall ;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surpris'd them all.

The sultry suns of Summer came,
And he grew thick and strong ;
His head weel arm'd wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober Autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale ;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

His colour sicken'd more and more,
He faded into age ;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

They've taen a weapon, long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee ;
Then ty'd him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore ;
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

They fillèd up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heavèd in John Barleycorn—
There, let him sink or swim.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe ;
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
They toss'd him to and fro.

They wasted, o'er a scorching flame,
The marrow of his bones ;
But a miller us'd him worst of all,
For he crush'd him between two stones.

And they hae taen his very heart's blood,
And drank it round and round ;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise ;
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

'Twill make a man forget his woe ;
'Twill heighten all his joy :
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Tho' the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand ;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland !

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR MAILIE.

THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE,—AN UNCO MOURNFU
TALE.

As Mailie, an' her lambs thegither,
Was ae day nibblin on the tether,
Upon her cloot * she coost † a hitch,
An' owre she warsl'd ‡ in the ditch :
There, groanin, dying, she did lie,
When *Hughoc*¹ he cam doytin§ by.

Wi' glowrin|| een, and lifted han's
Poor *Hughoc* like a statue stan's ;
He saw her days were near-hand ended,
But, wae's my heart ! he could na mend it !
He gaped wide, but naething spak,
At length poor Mailie silence brak.

“O thou, whase lamentable face
Appears to mourn my woefu' case !
My dying words attentive hear,
An' bear them to my Master dear.

“Tell him, if e'er again he keep
As muckle gear ¶ as buy a sheep—
O, bid him never tie them mair,
Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair !
But ca' them out to park or hill,
An' let them wander at their will :

* hoof. † cast. ‡ fell struggling. § walking stupidly.
|| staring. ¶ cash.

A neighbour herd-callant, about three-fourths as wise as other folk —R. B

So may his flock increase, an' grow
To scores o' lambs, and packs o' woo' !

“Tell him, he was a Master kin',
An' ay was guid to me an' mine ;
An' now my dying charge I gie him,
My helpless lambs, I trust them wi' him.

“O, bid him save their harmless lives,
Frae dogs, an' tods,* an' butchers' knives !
But gie them guid cow-milk their fill,
Till they be fit to fend themsel ;
An' tent them duly, e'en an' morn,
Wi' taets† o' hay an' rippst‡ o' corn.

“An' may they never learn the gaets,§
Of ither vile, wanrestfu' || pets—
To slink thro' slaps, an' reave an' steal,
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail !
So may they, like their great forbears,
For monie a year come thro' the sheers :
So wives will gie them bits o' bread,
An' bairns greet for them when they're dead.

“My poor toop-lamb, my son an' heir,
O, bid him breed him up wi' care !
An' if he live to be a beast,
To pit some havins ¶ in his breast !

An' warn him—what I winna name
To stay content wi' yowes at hame ;

* foxes.† small quantities.
|| restless.‡ handfuls.
¶ manners

§ ways.

An' no to rin an' wear his cloots,
Like ither menseless,* graceless brutes.

"An' niest, my yowie, silly thing,
Gude keep thee frae a tether string !
O, may thou ne'er forgather up,
Wi' ony blastit, moorland toop ;
But ay keep mind to moopt an' mell,†
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel !

"And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath,
I lea'e my blessin wi' you baith :
An' when you think upo' your mither,
Mind to be kind to ane anither.

"Now, honest *Hughoc*, dinna fail,
To tell my master a' my tale ;
An' bid him burn this cursed tether,
An' for thy pains thou'se get my blather."§

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
An' clos'd her een amang the dead !

[Carlyle considers this the poet's happiest effort of its peculiar kind : he classes it with the *Address to a Mouse*, and the *Auld Farmer's Mare*, but holds that "this has even more of sportive tenderness in it." It was composed one afternoon while engaged with his plough on the slopes of Lochlie. The poet's youngest brother *John* drove the horses, while the musing bard guided his plough in the even rig. Gilbert narrates the incident :—"As they were setting out about noon, with their teams, a curious-looking, awkward boy, named Hugh Wilson, ran up to them in a very excited manner, and with a rueful countenance, announced that poor Mailie had got entangled in her tether and was lying in the ditch. It had never occurred to the terror-stricken "*Huoc*" that he might have lent a hand in lifting her up: Mailie, however, was soon rescued from her peril, and lived—it is hoped—to see her bairns' bairns."]

* unmannerly.

† fondle.

‡ associates.

§ bladder.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY.

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
 Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose ;
 Our bardie's fate is at a close,
 Past a' remead !
 The last, sad cape-stane o' his woe's
 Poor Mailie's dead !

It's no the loss o' warl's gear,
 That could sae bitter draw the tear,
 Or mak our bardie, dowie, wear
 The mournin weed :
 He's lost a friend an' neebor dear,
 In Mailie dead.

Thro' a' the town she trotted by him ;
 A lang half-mile she could descry him ;
 Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
 She ran wi' speed :
 A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him,
 Than Mailie dead.

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
 An' could behave hersel wi' mense : *
 I'll say't, she never brak a fence,
 Thro' thievish greed.
 Our bardie, lanely, keeps the spence †
 Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the howe, ‡
 Her livin image in her yowe

* good manners,

† inner room.

‡ valley.

Comes bleatin till him, owre the knowe,*
 For bits o' bread ;
 An' down the briny pearls rowe
 For Mailie dead.

She was nae get † o' moorland tips, ‡
 Wi' tauted ket, § an' hairy hips ;
 For her forbears ¶ were brought in ships,
 Frae 'yont the Tweed
 A bonier fleesh ne'er cross'd the clips
 Than Mailie's—dead.

Wae worth that man wha first did shape
 That vile, wanchancie ¶ thing—a raep !
 It maks guid fellows girn an' gape,
 Wi' chokin dread ;
 An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape
 For Mailie dead.

O, a' ye bards on bonie Doon !
 An' wha on Ayr your chanter's tune !
 Come, join the melancholious croon
 O' Robin's reed !
 His heart will never get aboon—
 His Mailie's dead !

In preparing this "Elegy" for the press, the poet substituted the present sixth verse for the following:—

"She was nae get o' runted rams,
 Wi' woo like goats, and legs like trams :
 She was the flower o' Fairlie lambs—
 A famous breed ;
 Now Robin, greetin, chews the hams,
 O' Mailie dead."

* knoll.

§ matted fleece.

† offspring.

¶ ancestors.

‡ rams.

¶ unlucky.

SONG—THE RIGS O' BARLEY

It was upon a Lammas night,
When corn rigs are bonie,
Beneath the moon's unclouded light,
I held awa to Annie ;
The time flew by, wi' tentless heed ;
Till, 'tween the late and early,
Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed
To see me thro' the barley.
Corn rigs, an' barley rigs,
An' corn rigs are bonie :
I'll ne'er forget that happy night,
Amang the rigs wi' Annie.

The sky was blue, the wind was still,
The moon was shining clearly ;
I set her down, wi' right good will,
Amang the rigs o' barley :
I ken't her heart was a' my ain ;
I lov'd her most sincerely ;
I kiss'd her owre and owre again,
Amang the rigs o' barley.
Corn rigs, an' barley rigs, &c.

I lock'd her in my fond embrace ;
Her heart was beating rarely :
My blessings on that happy place,
Amang the rigs o' barley !
But by the moon and stars so bright,
That shone that hour so clearly !
She ay shall bless that happy night
Amang the rigs o' barley.
Corn rigs, an' barley rigs, &c.

I hae been blythe wi' comrades dear ;
I hae been merry drinking ;
I hae been joyfu' gath'rin gear ;
I hae been happy thinking :

But a' the pleasures e'er I saw,
Tho' three times doubl'd fairly—
That happy night was worth them a',
Amang the rigs o' barley.
Corn rigs, an' barley rigs, &c.

[Many of the "Annies" of the district contended for the honour of being the heroine of this warmly coloured, yet highly popular, lyric. The name of Anne Ronald has been mentioned; but the poet was content to admire her at a respectful distance. Anne Rankine, daughter of a farmer at Adamhill, within two miles west of Lochlie, "owned the soft impeachment," that she was the Annie of the "Rigs o' Barley."]

SONG—"COMPOSED IN AUGUST."

Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather;
The moorcock springs on whirring wings,
Amang the blooming heather:
Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer;
And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night,
To muse upon my charmer.

The partridge loves the fruitful fells,
The plover loves the mountains;
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells,
The soaring hern the fountains:
Thro' lofty groves the cushat roves,
The path of man to shun it;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,
The spreading thorn the linnet.

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender;
Some social join, and leagues combine,
Some solitary wander:
Avaunt, away, the cruel sway!
Tyrannic man's dominion;

The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
The flutt'ring, gory pinion !

But, Peggy dear, the ev'ning's clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow :
Come let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of Nature ;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And ev'ry happy creature.

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
Till the silent moon shine clearly ;
I'll grasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I love thee dearly :
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not Autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer !

If this lyric was suggested and partly sketched out when the poet was but in his seventeenth year, we are assured, on the testimony of Mrs Begg, that at a considerably later period he experienced another love-fit for Kirk-oswald Peggy, and corresponded with her, with a view to matrimony. It would be then that he dressed up this finely descriptive composition into its existing form ; and under date 1786 we give the verses he inscribed on a presentation copy to her of his first edition.

SONG—"MY NANIE, O."

BEHIND yon hills where Lugar flows,
'Mang moors an' mosses many, O,
The wintry sun the day has clos'd,
And I'll awa to Nanie, O.

The westlin wind blows loud an' shill ;
The night's baith mirk and rainy, O ;
But I'll get my plaid an' out I'll steal,
An' owre the hill to Nanie, O.

My Nanie's charming, sweet, an' young ;
Nae artfu' wiles to win ye, O :
May ill befa' the flattering tongue
That wad beguile my Nanie, O.

Her face is fair, her heart is true ;
As spotless as she's bonie, O ;
The op'ning gowan, wat wi' dew,
Nae purer is than Nanie, O.

A country lad is my degree,
An' few there be that ken me, O ;
But what care I how few they be,
I'm welcome ay to Nanie, O.

My riches a's my penny-fee,
An' I maun guide it cannie, O ;
But warl's gear ne'er troubles me,
My thoughts are a'—my Nanie, O.

Our auld guidman delights to view
His sheep an' kye thrive bonie, O ;
But I'm as blythe that hauds his pleugh,
An' has nae care but Nanie, O.

Come weel, come woe, I care na by ;
I'll tak what Heav'n will sen' me, O :
Nae ither care in life have I,
But live, an' love my Nanie, O.

[The Rev. Hamilton Paul, who belonged to Ayrshire, and was almost a contemporary of Burns, thus wrote of the heroineship of this story in 1819:—"In Kilmarnock, Burns first saw 'Nanie,' the subject of one of his most popular ballads. She captivated him as well by the charms of her person as by the melody of her voice. As he devoted much of his spare time to her society, and listened to her singing with the most religious attention, her sister observed to him, that he paid more attention to Nanie's singing than he would do to a preaching ; he retorted with an oath—"Madam, there's no comparison." On the other hand, Gilbert Burns informed George Thomson that "Nanie was a farmer's daughter in Tarbolton parish, named Fleming, to whom the poet paid some of that roving attention which he was continually devoting to some one."]

SONG—GREEN GROW THE RASHES.

Chor.—Green grow the rashes, O ;
Green grow the rashes, O ;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses, O.

THERE'S nought but care on ev'ry han',
In every hour that passes, O :
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O.
Green grow, &c.

The war'ly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them, O ;
An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.
Green grow, &c.

But gie me a cannie* hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, O ;
An' war'ly cares, an' war'ly men,
May a' gae tapsalteerie,† O !
Green grow, &c.

For you sae douce,‡ ye sneer at this ;
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O :
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
He dearly lov'd the lasses, O.
Green grow, &c.

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O :
Her prentice han' she try'd on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O.
Green grow, &c.

* snug.

† topsy-turvy.

‡ grave.

SONG—"INDEED WILL I," QUO' FINDLAY.

Tune—"Lass, an I come near thee.

- "WHA is that at my bower-door?"
 'O wha is it but Findlay !'
"Then gae your gate, ye 'se nae be here :'
 'Indeed maun I,' quo' Findlay,
"What make ye, sae like a thief?"
 'O come and see,' quo' Findlay ;
"Before the morn ye'll work mischief"—
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.
- "Gif I rise and let you in'—
 'Let me in,' quo' Findlay,
"Ye'll keep me waukin wi' your din"—
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay,
"In my bower if ye should stay"—
 'Let me stay,' quo' Findlay ;
"I fear ye'll bide till break o' day"—
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.
- "Here this night if ye remain"—
 'I'll remain,' quo' Findlay ;
"I dread ye'll learn the gait again"—
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.
"What may pass within this bower"—
 'Let it pass,' quo' Findlay ;
"Ye maun conceal till your last hour"—
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.

[Gilbert Burns assured Cromek that his brother composed this song in emulation of a piece in Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany*, called "The auld man's best argument."

James Findlay, an Officer of Excise in Tarbolton, who afterwards married one of the "belles of Mauchline," was appointed, in March 1788, to train Burns for the duties of an exciseman.]

REMORSE—A FRAGMENT.

OF all the numerous ills that hurt our peace—
That press the soul, or wring the mind with anguish,
Beyond comparison the worst are those
By our own folly, or our guilt brought on :
In ev'ry other circumstance, the mind
Has this to say, 'it was no deed of mine :'
But, when to all the evil of misfortune
This sting is added, 'blame thy foolish self !'
Or worser far, the pangs of keen remorse,
The torturing, gnawing consciousness of guilt—
Of guilt, perhaps, where we've involvèd others,
The young, the innocent, who fondly lov'd us ;
Nay more, that very love their cause of ruin !
O burning hell ! in all thy store of torments
There's not a keener lash !
Lives there a man so firm, who, while his heart
Feels all the bitter horrors of his crime,
Can reason down its agonizing throbs ;
And, after proper purpose of amendment,
Can firmly force his jarring thoughts to peace ?
O happy, happy, enviable man !
O glorious magnanimity of soul !

EPITAPH ON WM. HOOD, SENR., IN
TARBOLTON.

HERE Souter Hood in death does sleep ;
To hell if he's gane thither,
Satan, gie him thy gear to keep ;
He'll haud it weel thegether.

[The poet printed this with the title "ON A CELEBRATED RULIN ELDER." It appears that one of the Tarbolton elders had provoked the poet's hostility by his extreme penuriousness.]

EPITAPH ON MY OWN FRIEND AND MY FATHER'S FRIEND, WM. MUIR IN TAR- BOLTON MILL.

AN honest man here lies at rest,
As e'er God with his image blest ;
The friend of man, the friend of truth,
The friend of age, and guide of youth :
Few hearts like his—with virtue warm'd,
Few heads with knowledge so informed :
If there's another world, he lives in bliss ;
If there is none, he made the best of this.

This has always been regarded as one of the finest of the poet's numerous
compliments, paid in a posthumous form, to hale and hearty friends. The
subject of it was the tenant of "Willie's Mill" of Death and Dr Hornbook,
a life-long friend of Burns and his relations. He died in 1793.]

EPITAPH ON MY EVER HONOURED FATHER.

O YE whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
Draw near with pious rev'rence, and attend !
Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
The tender father, and the gen'rous friend ;
The pitying heart that felt for human woe,
The dauntless heart that fear'd no human pride ;
The friend of man—to vice alone a foe ;
For "ev'n his failings lean'd to virtue's side."

The death of William Burnes happened at Lochlie, on 13th February
1793. These lines of the son are engraved on the father's headstone in
Ayr kirkyard; and the reader, in musing over it, is apt to revert to the
honorable words of John Murdoch :—"O for a world of men of such dis-
positions ! I have often wished, for the good of mankind, that it were as
common to honour and perpetuate the memory of those who excel in
moral rectitude, as it is to extol what are called heroic actions. Then
would the mausoleum of the friend of my youth overtop and surpass most
of those we see in Westminster Abbey !"]

BALLAD ON THE AMERICAN WAR.

Tune—"Killiecrankie."

WHEN Guildford good our pilot stood.

An' did our hellim * thraw, man ;

Ae night, at tea, began a plea,

Within America, man :

Then up they gat the maskin-pat, †

And in the sea did jaw, ‡ man ;

An' did nae less, in full congress,

Than quite refuse our law, man.

Then thro' the lakes Montgomery ¹ takes.

I wat he was na slaw, man ;

Down Lowrie's Burn ² he took a turn,

And Carleton did ca', man :

But yet, whatreck, he, at Quebec,

Montgomery-like ³ did fa', man,

Wi' sword in hand, before his band,

Amang his en'mies a', man.

Poor Tammy Gage within a cage

Was kept at Boston-ha', ⁴ man ;

* helm.

† infusing pot.

‡ toss.

¹ General Richard Montgomery invaded Canada, autumn 1775, and took Montreal,—the British commander, Sir Guy Carleton, retiring before him. In an attack on Quebec he was less fortunate, being killed by a stone grape-shot in leading on his men at Cape Diamond.

² Lowrie's Burn, a pseudonym for the St Lawrence.

³ A passing compliment to the Montgomeries of Coilsfield, the patron of the poet.

⁴ General Gage, governor of Massachusetts, was cooped up in Boston by General Washington during the latter part of 1775 and early part of 1776. In consequence of his inefficiency, he was replaced in October of that year by General Howe.

Till Willie Howe took o'er the knowe
 For Philadelphia,¹ man ;
 Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin
 Guid christian bluid to draw, man ;
 But at New-York, wi' knife an' fork,
 Sir-Loin he hackèd sma',² man.

Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip,
 Till Fraser brave did fa', man ;
 Then lost his way, ae misty day,
 In Saratoga shaw,* man.³
 Cornwallis fought as lang's he dought,
 An' did the buckskin's claw,⁴ man ;
 But Clinton's glaive frae rust to save,
 He hung it to the wa', man.

Then Montague, an' Guilford too,
 Began to fear a fa', man ;
 And Sackville dour, wha stood the stoure,†
 The German chief to thraw,‡ man :
 For Paddy Burke, like ony Turk,
 Nae mercy had at a', man ;
 An' Charlie Fox threw by the box,
 An' lows'd his tinkler jaw, man.

* wood.

† commotion.

‡ thwart.

General Howe removed his army from New York to Philadelphia in the summer of 1777.

Alluding to a *rassia* made by orders of Howe at Peekskill, March 1777, when a large quantity of cattle belonging to the Americans was destroyed.

General Burgoyne surrendered his army to General Gates, at Saratoga, on the Hudson, October 1776.

Alluding to the active operations of Lord Cornwallis in Virginia, in 1781, all of which ended, however, in his surrender of his army at Yorktown, October 1781, while vainly hoping for reinforcements from General Clinton at New York.

Then Rockingham took up the game ;
 Till death did on him ca', man ;
 When Shelburne meek held up his cheek,
 Conform to gospel law, man :
 Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,
 They did his measures thraw, man ;
 For North an' Fox united stocks,
 An' bore him to the wa', man.¹

Then clubs an' hearts were Charlie's cartes,
 He swept the stakes awa', man,
 Till the diamond's ace, of Indian race,
 Led him a sair *faux pas*, man :²
 The Saxon lads, wi' loud placads,*
 On Chatham's boy did ca', man ;
 An' Scotland drew her pipe an' blew,
 " Up, Willie, waur† them a', man !"

Behind the throne then Granville's gone,
 A secret word or twa, man ;
 While slee Dundas arous'd the class
 Be-north the Roman wa', man :
 An' Chatham's wraith, in heav'nly graith,‡
 (Inspired bardies saw, man),
 Wi' kindling eyes, cry'd, " Willie, rise !
 Would I hae fear'd them a', man?"

* cheers.

† vanquish.

‡ guise.

¹ Lord North's administration was succeeded by that of the Marquis Rockingham, March 1782. At the death of the latter in the succeeding July, Lord Shelburne became prime minister, and Mr Fox resigned secretaryship. Under his lordship, peace was restored, January 1783. the union of Lord North and Mr Fox, Lord Shelburne was soon after forced to resign in favour of his rivals, the heads of the celebrated coalition.

² Fox's famous India Bill, by which his ministry was brought to destruction, December 1783.

But, word an' blow, North, Fox, and Co.
 Gowff'd* Willie like a ba', man ;
 Till Suthron raise, an' coost their claise
 Behind him in a raw, man :
 An' Caledon threw by the drone,
 An' did her whittle† draw, man ;
 An' swoor fu' rude, thro' dirt an' bluid,
 To mak it guid in law, man.¹

The poet applied to the Earl of Glencairn and to Mr Erskine, Dean of
 culty, for their opinion as to the policy of including this poem in his
 inburgh volume, and they seem to have approved of it.]

REPLY TO AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY J. RANKINE.

I AM a keeper of the law
 In some sma' points, altho' not a' ;
 Some people tell me gin I fa',
 Ae way or ither,
 The breaking of ae point, tho' sma',
 Breaks a' thegither.‡

I hae been in for't ance or twice,
 And winna say o'er far for thrice ;
 Yet never met wi' that surprise
 · That broke my rest ;
 But now a rumour's like to rise—
 A whaup's§ i' the nest !

* struck.

† knife.

‡ James ii. 10.

§ Curlew, a bird that will scream.

In the new parliament called by Mr Pitt, after his accession to office in
 spring of 1784, amidst the many new members brought in for his sup-
 port, and that of the king's prerogative, there was an exceeding proportion
 from Scotland.

EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE,

ENCLOSING SOME POEMS.

O ROUGH, rude, ready-witted Rankine,
 The wale* o' cocks for fun an' drinking !
 There's mony godly folks are thinking,
 Your dreams¹ and tricks
 Will send you Korah-like a-sinkin,
 Straught to auld Nick's.

Ye hae sae mony cracks an' cants,
 And in your wicked, drucken rants,
 Ye mak a devil o' the saunts,
 An' fill them fou ;
 And then their failings, flaws, an' wants,
 Are a' seen thro'.

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it !
 That holy robe, O dinna tear it !
 Spare't for their sakes, wha aften wear it—
 The lads in black ;
 But your curst wit, when it comes near it,
 Rives't† aff their back.

Think, wicked Sinner, wha ye're skaithing : ‡
 It's just the 'Blue-gown' badge an' claithing
 O' saunts ; tak that, ye lea'e them naething
 To ken them by,
 Frae ony unregenerate heathen,
 Like you or I.

* choice.

† tears it.

‡ damaging.

¹ A certain humorous dream of his was then making a noise in country side.—*R. B.*

I've sent you here some rhyming ware,
 A' that I bargain'd for, an' mair ;
 Sae, when ye hae an hour to spare,
 I will expect,
 Yon sang¹ ye'll sen't, wi' cannie* care,
 And no neglect.

Tho' faith, sma' heart hae I to sing !
 My muse drow† scarcely spread her wing ;
 I've play'd mysel a bonie spring,
 An' danc'd my fill !
 I'd better gaen an' sair't‡ the king,
 At Bunker's Hill.

'Twas ae night lately, in my fun,
 I gaed a rovin wi' the gun,
 An' brought a pairrick to the grun' —
 A bonie hen ;
 And, as the twilight was begun,
 Thought nane wad ken.

The poor, wee thing was little hurt ;
 I straiket it a wee for sport,
 Ne'er thinkin they wad fash§ me for't ;
 But, Deil-ma-care !
 Somebody tells the poacher-court,||
 The hale affair.

Some auld, us'd hands had taen a note,
 That sic a hen had got a shot ;
 I was suspected for the plot ;
 I scorn'd to lie ;

* considerate.
 § bother.

† can.

‡ served.
 || kirk-session.

* A song he had promised the author.—*R. B.*

So gat the whistle o' my groat,
An' pay't the fee

It pits me ay as mad's a hare ;
So I can rhyme nor write nae mair ,
But pennyworths again is fair,
When time's expedient :
Meanwhile I am, respected Sir,
Your most obedient.

[Adamhill is in Craigie parish, lying within two miles west of Lochlie.]

A POET'S WELCOME TO HIS LOVE-BEGOTTE DAUGHTER.

THE FIRST INSTANCE THAT ENTITLED HIM TO THE
VENERABLE APPELLATION OF FATHER.

THOU'S welcome, wean ; mishanter* fa' me,
If thoughts o' thee, or yet thy mamie,
Shall ever dauntont† me or awe me,
My bonie lady,
Or if I blush when thou shalt ca' me
Tyta or daddie.

Tho' now they ca' me fornicator,
An' tease my name in kintry clatter,
The mair they talk, I'm kent the better,
E'en let them clash ;
An auld wife's tongue's a feckless ‡ matter
To gie ane fash.

Welcome ! my bonie, sweet, wee dochter,
Tho' ye come here a wee unsought for,

* mishap.

† discourage.

‡ powerless.

And tho' your comin' I hae fought for,
 Baith kirk and queir ;
 Yet, by my faith, ye're no unwrought for,
 That I shall swear !

Wee image o' my bonie Betty,
 As fatherly I kiss and daut * thee,
 As dear, and near my heart I set thee
 Wi' as gude will
 As a' the priests had seen me get thee
 That's out o' h—ll.

Sweet fruit o' mony a merry dint,
 My funny toil is now a' tint,
 Sin' thou cam to the warl' asklent,†
 Which fools may scoff at ;
 In my last plack ‡ thy part's be in't
 The better ha'f o't.

Tho' I should be the waur bestead,
 Thou's be as braw and bienly § clad,
 And thy young years as nicely bred
 Wi' education,
 As ony brat o' wedlock's bed,
 In a' thy station.

Lord grant that thou may ay inherit
 Thy mither's person, grace, an' merit,
 An' thy poor, worthless daddy's spirit,
 Without his failins,
 'Twill please me mair to see thee heir it,
 Than stocket mailens. ||

For if thou be what I wad hae thee,
 And tak the counsel I shall gie thee,

* fondle.

† irregularly.

‡ a small coin.

§ warmly.

|| farms.

I'll never rue my trouble wi' thee—
 The cost nor shame o't,
 But be a loving father to thee,
 And brag the name o't.

[The child—born in Nov. 1784—was tenderly reared and educated Mossgiel under the care of the poet's mother and sisters. When "Fanny Burns" arrived at the age of twenty-one years, she received £200 marriage-portion out of a fund that had been subscribed for the widow children of the bard. She bore a striking resemblance to her father, became the wife of Mr John Bishop, overseer at Polkemmet, and died December 1816, at the age of thirty-two.]

SONG—O LEAVE NOVELS.

O LEAVE novels, ye Mauchline belles,
 Ye're safer at your spinning-wheel ;
 Such witching books are baited hooks
 For rakish rooks like Rob Mossgiel ;
 Your fine Tom Jones and Grandisons,
 They make your youthful fancies reel ;
 They heat your brains, and fire your veins,
 And then you're prey for Rob Mossgiel.

Beware a tongue that's smoothly hung,
 A heart that warmly seems to feel ;
 That feeling heart but acts a part—
 'Tis rakish art in Rob Mossgiel.
 The frank address, the soft caress,
 Are worse than poisoned darts of steel ;
 The frank address, and politesse,
 Are all finesse in Rob Mossgiel.

[It would have been well for at least one of those "belles" had she heeded the poet's candid warning; but, according to the philosophy of a reviewer and biographer of Burns whose observations are commended by Lockhart—"To warn the young and unsuspecting of their danger, is only to stimulate their curiosity."]

FRAGMENT—THE MAUCHLINE LADY

WHEN first I came to Stewart Kyle,
 My mind it was na steady ;
 Where'er I gaed, where'er I rade,
 A mistress still I had ay :

But when I came roun' by Mauchline toun,
 Not dreading anybody,
 My heart was caught, before I thought,
 And by a Mauchline lady.

[The poet's first rencontre with Jean Armour was in the summer of 1784, and the present fragment applies to her.

"Stewart Kyle" is that part of the central district of Ayrshire which lies between the rivers Irvine and Ayr. The poet was originally of "King's Kyle,"—the district between the Ayr and the Doon. He shifted to Stewart Kyle on leaving Mount Oliphant for Lochlie, in 1777.]

FRAGMENT—MY GIRL SHE'S AIRY.

Tune—"Black Jock."

MY girl she's airy, she's buxom and gay ;
 Her breath is as sweet as the blossoms in May ;
 A touch of her lips it ravishes quite :
 She's always good natur'd, good humor'd, and free ;
 She dances, she glances, she smiles upon me ;
 I never am happy when out of her sight.

[The above fragment of song the poet records in his *Common-place Book*, under date September 1784. Had it been recorded a year later, we might safely assume that Jean Armour was the "airy girl" here sketched.]

THE BELLES OF MAUCHLINE.

IN Mauchline there dwells six proper young belles,
 The pride of the place and its neighbourhood a' ;
 There carriage and dress, a stranger would guess,
 In London or Paris, they'd gotten it a.'

Miss Miller* is fine, Miss Markland's† divine,
 Miss Smith‡ she has wit, and Miss Betty§ is braw
 There's beauty and fortune to get wi' Miss Morton,||
 But Armour's the jewel for me o' them a'.

[The after-history of the "six proper young belles," catalogued by Burns in this little piece, has been devoutly traced and recorded. Miss Hel Miller(*) married Burns' friend, Dr Mackenzie. The "divine" M Markland(†) was married to Mr James Findlay, an officer of excise, first Tarbolton, afterwards at Greenock. The witty Mrs Jean Smith (§) bestowed herself upon Mr James Candlish, who, like Findlay, was a friend of Burns. The "braw" Miss Betty Miller (§) became Mrs Templeton; she was sister of No. 1, and died early in life. Miss Morton (||) gave her "beauty and fortune" to Mr Paterson, a merchant in Mauchline. Of Armour's history of immortality has taken charge. The last survivor (§) died in January 185 she was mother of the Rev. Dr Candlish of Edinburgh, who was laid beside his parents in Old Calton, at Edinburgh, in October 1873.]

EPITAPH ON A NOISY POLEMIC.

BELOW thir stanes lie Jamie's banes;
 O Death, it's my opinion,
 Thou ne'er took such a bleth'rin b-tch
 Into thy dark dominion!

[The subject of this versicle was James Humphrey, a jobbing mason well known in Mauchline and Tarbolton for his tendency to talk on matters of church doctrine.]

EPITAPH ON A HENPECKED SQUIRE.

AS father Adam first was fool'd,
 (A case that's still too common,)
 Here lies a man a woman ruled
 The devil ruled the woman.

EPIGRAM ON THE SAID OCCASION.

O DEATH, had'st thou but spar'd his life,
 Whom we this day lament !
 We freely wad exchanged the wife,
 And a' been weel content.
 Ev'n as he is, cauld in his graff,
 The swap* we yet will do't ;
 Tak thou the carlin's carcase aff,
 Thou'se get the saul o' boot.†

ANOTHER.

ONE Queen Artemisa, as old stories tell,
 When deprived of her husband she lovèd so well,
 In respect for the love and affection he show'd her.
 She reduc'd him to dust and she drank up the powder.
 But Queen Netherplace, of a diff'rent complexion,
 When called on to order the fun'ral direction,
 Would have eat her dead lord, on a slender pretence,
 Not to show her respect, but—to save the expence !

[The three foregoing epigrams were directed against Mr Campbell of Netherplace and his wife, whose house and grounds the poet daily passed in his way between Mossgiel and Mauchline.]

ON TAM THE CHAPMAN.

As Tam the chapman on a day,
 Wi' Death forgather'd by the way,
 Weel pleas'd, he greets a wight so famous,
 And Death was nae less pleas'd wi' Thomas,
 Wha cheerfully lays down his pack,
 And there blaws up a hearty crack :
 His social, friendly, honest heart
 Sae tickled Death, they could na part ;

* exchange.

† into the bargain.

Sae, after viewing knives and garters,
Death takes him hame to gie him quarters.

[These lines were composed on the recovery of Thomas Kennedy, a friend of the poet's, from a severe illness. When advanced in life, Kennedy communicated them to Cobbett's Magazine.]

EPITAPH ON JOHN RANKINE.

AE day, as Death, that gruesome carl,
Was driving to the tither warl'
A mixtie-maxtie motley squad,
And mony a guilt-bespotted lad—
Black gowns of each denomination,
And thieves of every rank and station,
From him that wears the star and garter,
To him that wintles in a halter :
Ashamed himself to see the wretches,
He mutters, glowrin at the bitches,
“By G—d I'll not be seen behint them,
Nor 'mang the sp'ritual core present them,
Without, at least, ae honest man,
To grace this d——d infernal clan !”
By Adamhill a glance he threw,
“L—d God !” quoth he, “I have it now ;
There's just the man I want, i' faith !”
And quickly stoppit Rankine's breath.

LINES ON THE AUTHOR'S DEATH,

WRITTEN WITH THE SUPPOSED VIEW OF BEING HANDED
TO RANKINE AFTER THE POET'S INTERMENT.

HE who of Rankine sang, lies stiff and dead,
And a green grassy hillock hides his head ;
Alas ! alas ! a devilish change indeed.

[These lines must be regarded as a counterpart of the poet's elegy on himself, composed shortly afterwards, beginning,—

“Now Robin lies in his last lair,
He'll gabble rhyme and sing nae mair.”]

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.—A DIRGE.

WHEN chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One ev'ning, as I wander'd forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spied a man, whose aged step
Seem'd weary, worn with care ;
His face was furrow'd o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

"Young stranger, whither wand'rest thou ?"
Began the rev'rend sage ;
"Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage ?
Or haply, prest with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth, with me to mourn
The miseries of man.

"The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labour to support
A haughty lordling's pride ;—
I've seen yon weary winter-sun
Twice forty times return ;
And ev'ry time has added proofs,
That man was made to mourn.

"O man ! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time !
Mis-spending all thy precious hours—
Thy glorious, youthful prime !
Alternate follies take the sway ;
Licentious passions burn ;

Which tenfold force gives Nature's law,
That man was made to mourn.

“Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might ;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right :
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn ;
Then Age and Want—oh ! ill-match'd pair—
Shew man was made to mourn.

“A few seem favourites of fate,
In pleasure's lap carest ;
Yet, think not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly blest :
But oh ! what crowds in ev'ry land,
All wretched and forlorn,
Thro' weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn.

“Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame !
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame !
And man, whose heav'n-erected face
The smiles of love adorn,—
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn !

“See yonder poor, o'erlabour'd wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil ;
And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, tho' a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

“ If I’m design’d yon lordling’s slave —
By Nature’s law design’d —
Why was an independent wish
E’er planted in my mind ?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty, or scorn ?
Or why has man the will and pow’r
To make his fellow mourn ?

“ Yet, let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast :
This partial view of human-kind
Is surely not the best !
The poor, oppressèd, honest man
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn !

“ O Death ! the poor man’s dearest friend,
The kindest and the best !
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest !
The great, the wealthy fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn ;
But, oh ! a blest relief for those
That weary-laden mourn ! ”

[A lovely spot called “Haugh,” near where the *Lugar* flows into the river Ayr, is pointed out as the locality indicated by the poet in his opening verse. In one of his letters to Mrs Dunlop, Burns writes :—“ I had an old grand-uncle with whom my mother lived in her girlish years ; the good old man was long blind ere he died, during which time his highest enjoyment was to sit down and cry, while my mother would sing the simple old song, ‘The Life and Age of Man.’ ” Southey in his “*Doctor*,” thus refers to the present poem, and its connection with the above pathetic incident :—“ It is certain that this old song was in Burns’s mind when he composed to the same cadence those well-known stanzas of which the burthen is ‘Man was made to mourn.’ But the old blind man’s tears were tears of piety, not of regret ; while he thus listened and wept, his heart was not so much in the past as his hopes were in the future. Burns must have been conscious in his better hours (and he had many such) that he inherited the feeling—if not the sober piety—which is so touchingly exemplified in this family anecdote.”]

THE TWA HERDS ; OR, THE HOLY TULYIE.*

AN UNCO MOURNFU' TALE.

"Blockheads with reason, wicked wits abhor,
But fool with fool is barbarous civil war."—POPE.

O a' ye pious godly flocks,
Weel fed on pastures orthodox,
Wha now will keep you frae the fox,
Or worrying tykes ?†
Or wha will tent the waifs ‡ an' crocks, §
About the dykes ?

The twa best herds in a' the wast,
That e'er ga'e gospel horn a blast
These five an' twenty simmers past—
Oh, dool to tell !
Hae had a bitter black out-cast
Atween themsel.

O, Moodie, man, an' wordy Russell,
How could you raise so vile a bustle ;
Ye'll see how "new-light" herds will whistle,
An' think it fine !
The L—'s cause ne'er gat sic a twistle,
Sin' I hae min'.

O, sirs ! whae'er wad hae expeckit
Your duty ye wad sae negleckit,
Ye wha were ne'er by lairds respeckit
To wear the plaid ;
But by the brutes themselves eleckit,
To be their guide.

* fight.

† dogs.

‡ stragglers.

§ old ewes.

What flock wi' Moodie's flock could rank
 Sae hale and hearty every shank,
 Nae poison'd soor Arminian stank

He let them taste ;

Frae Calvin's well, ay clear they drank,—
 O, sic a feast !

The thummart, * willcat, † brock, ‡ an' tod, §
 Weel kend his voice thro' a' the wood,
 He smell'd their ilka hole an' road,

Baith out an in ;

An' weel he lik'd to shed their bluid,
 An' sell their skin.

What herd like Russell tell'd his tale ;
 His voice was heard thro' muir and dale,¹
 He kenn'd the L—'s sheep, ilka tail,

Owre a' the height ;

An' saw gin they were sick or hale,
 At the first sight.

He fine a mangy sheep could scrub,
 Or nobly fling the gospel club,
 And “ new-light ” herds could nicely drub

Or pay their skin ;

Could shake them o'er the burning dub,
 Or heave them in.

Sic twa—O ! do I live to see't,
 Sic famous twa should disagree't,
 And names, like “ villain,” “ hypocrite,”

Ilk ither gi'en,

While “ new-light ” herds, wi' laughin spite,
 Say neither's lien !

* foumart, or pole-cat.

† wild-cat.

‡ badger.

* fox.

Russell's voice could be heard a mile off.

Forby turn-coats amang oursel,
 There's Smith¹ for anc ;
 I doubt he's but a grey nick quill,*
 An' that ye'll fin'.

O ! a' ye flocks o'er a' the hills,
 By mosses, meadows, moors, and fells,
 Come, join your counsel and your skills
 To cove the lairds,
 An' get the brutes the power themsels
 To chuse their herds.

Then Orthodoxy yet may prance,
 An' Learning in a woody† dance,
 An' that fell cur ca'd "common-sense,"²
 That bites sae sair,
 Be banished o'er the sea to France :
 Let him bark there.

Then Shaw's an' D'rymple's eloquence,
 M'Gill's close nervous excellence,
 M'Quhae's pathetic manly sense,
 An' guid M'Math,
 Wi' Smith, wha thro' the heart can glance,
 May a' pack aff.

[The author calls this poem in his autobiography, "a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two reverend Calvinists," and tells us that it was the first of his poetic offspring that saw the light, meaning its circulation in manuscript. In our heading we give three titles, taken respectively from various printed copies ; for we are not aware that any holograph copy exists except the one in the British Museum, which calls it "The Holy Tulyie."

The reader has been already prepared, by the author's outburst against

* soft, unfit for a pen.

† gallows.

¹ Rev. George Smith of Galston, here and in "The Holy Fair" claimed as friendly to the "new-light" party ; but cried down in "The Kirk's Alarm."

"Common-sense" is claimed as the attribute of the "new-light" party

clerical domination in the Epistle to Rankine, to find him writing short thereafter in the same vein. Lockhart tells us—as from personal knowledge—that Burns personally witnessed in open court the unseemly contentions between the “twa herds,”—to wit, the Rev. John Russell of Kilmarnock and the Rev. Alex. Moodie of Riccarton.

EPISTLE TO DAVIE, A BROTHER POET.

JANUARY.

WHILE winds frae off Ben-Lomond blaw,
 An' bar the doors wi' drivin' snaw,
 An' hing us owre the ingle,
 I set me down to pass the time,
 An' spin a verse or twa o' rhyme,
 In hamely, westlin jingle :
 While frosty winds blaw in the drift,
 Ben to the chimla lug,*
 I grudge a wee the great-folk's gift,
 That live sae bien† an' snug :
 I tent less, and want less
 Their roomy fire-side ;
 But hanker, and canker,
 To see their cursed pride.

It's hardly in a body's pow'r,
 To keep, at times, frae being sour,
 To see how things are shar'd ;
 How best o' chields are whyles in want,
 While coofs‡ on countless thousands rant,
 And ken na how to ware't ; §
 But, Davie, lad, ne'er fash || your head,
 Tho' we hae little gear ; ¶
 We're fit to win our daily bread,
 As lang's we're hale and fier : **

* inwards to the very fireside.

§ spend it

|| bother.

† comfortable.

¶ wealth.

‡ fools.

** active

‘Mair spier* na nor fear na,”¹
 Auld age ne’er mind a feg ;†
 The last o’t, the warst o’t,
 Is only but to beg.

To lye in kilns and barns at e’en,
 When banes are craz’d, and bluid is thin,
 Is, doubtless, great distress !
 Yet then content could make us blest ;
 Ev’n then, sometimes, we’d snatch a taste
 Of truest happiness.

The honest heart that’s free frae a’
 Intended fraud or guile.
 However Fortune kick the ba’,
 Has aye some cause to smile ;
 An’ mind still, you’ll find still,
 A comfort this nae sma’ ;
 Nae mair then, we’ll care then,
 Nae farther we can fa’.

What tho’, like commoners of air,
 We wander out, we know not where,
 But either house or hal’,‡
 Yet nature’s charms, the hills and woods,
 The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
 Are free alike to all.

In days when daisies deck the ground,
 And blackbirds whistle clear,
 With honest joy our hearts will bound,
 To see the coming year :

On braes when we please then,
 We’ll sit an’ sowth§ a tune ;
 Syne rhyme till’t, we’ll time till’t,
 An’ sing’t when we hae done.

* enquire.

† fig.

‡ shelter.

§ hum.

¹ Ramsay.—*R.B.*

It's no in titles nor in rank ;
 It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
 To purchase peace and rest :
 It's no in makin muckle, mair ;
 It's no in books, it's no in lear,*
 To make us truly blest :
 If happiness hae not her seat
 An' centre in the breast,
 We may be wise, or rich, or great.
 But never can be blest ;
 Nae treasures nor pleasures
 Could make us happy lang ;
 The heart ay's the part ay
 That makes us right or wrang.

Think ye, that sic as you and I,
 Wha drudge an' drive thro' wet and dry,
 Wi' never ceasing toil ;
 Think ye, are we less blest than they,
 Wha scarcely tent† us in their way,
 As hardly worth their while ?
 Alas ! how oft in haughty mood,
 God's creatures they oppress !
 Or else, neglecting a' that's good,
 They riot in excess !
 Baith careless and fearless
 Of either heaven or hell .
 Esteeming, and deeming
 It a' an idle tale !

Then let us cheerfu' acquiesce,
 Nor make our scanty pleasures less,
 By pining at our state :
 And, even should misfortunes come,
 I, here wha sit, hae met wi' some—
 An's thankfu' for them yet,

* learning

† notice.

They gie the wit of age to youth ;
They let us ken oursel ;
They make us see the naked truth—
The real guid and ill :
Tho' losses an' crosses
Be lessons right severe,
There's wit there, ye'll get there,
Ye'll find nae other where.

But tent me, Davie, ace o' hearts !
(To say aught less wad wrang the cartes,
And flatt'ry I detest)
This life has joys for you and I ;
An' joys that riches ne'er could buy,
An' joys the very best.
There's a' the pleasures o' the heart,
The lover an' the frien' ;
Ye hae your Meg, your dearest part,
And I my darling Jean !
It warms me, it charms me,
To mention but her name :
It heats me, it beets me,
An' sets me a' on flame !

O all ye Pow'rs who rule above !
O Thou whose very self art love !
Thou know'st my words sincere !
The life-blood streaming thro' my heart,
Or my more dear immortal part,
Is not more fondly dear !
When heart-corroding care and grief
Deprive my soul of rest,
Her dear idea brings relief,
And solace to my breast.
Thou Being, All-seeing,
O hear my fervent pray'r ;

Still take her, and make her
Thy most peculiar care !

All hail ; ye tender feelings dear !
The smile of love, the friendly tear,
The sympathetic glow !
Long since, this world's thorny ways
Had number'd out my weary days,
Had it not been for you !
Fate still has blest me with a friend,
In ev'ry care and ill ;
And oft a more endearing band—
A tie more tender still.
It lightens, it brightens
The tenebrific scene,
To meet with, an' greet with
My Davie, or my Jean !

O, how that *Name* inspires my style !
The words come skelpin, rank an' file,
Amaist before I ken !
The ready measure rins as fine,
As Phœbus an' the famous Nine
Were glowrin owre my pen.
My spavet Pegasus will limp,
Till ance he's fairly het ;
And then he'll hilch,* and stilt, an' jimp,
And rin an unco fit: †
But least then the beast then
Should rue this hasty ride,
I'll light now, and dight ‡ now
His sweaty, wizen'd § hide.

[The "Davie" of the poem was David Sillar, one year younger than Burns, and also the son of a small farmer near Tarbolton. He printed a volume of rhyming ware, which appeared in 1789, and Burns, then a

* hobble. † run at an uncommon pace. ‡ wipe down. § withered

Ellisland, helped him to his utmost in procuring subscribers. "Davie" eventually became a magistrate of Irvine, and survived till 1830, much respected, and possessed of considerable means.

The poem exhibits Burns in the full blossom of attachment to his Jean. It was not the fate of Sillar to obtain the hand of his "Meg" referred to in the Epistle: she was *Margaret Orr*, a servant at Stair House.)

HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER.

"And send the godly in a pet to pray."—POPE.

ARGUMENT.—Holy Willie was a rather oldish bachelor elder, in the parish of Mauchline, and much and justly famed for that polemical chattering, which ends in tippling orthodoxy, and for that spiritualized bawdry which refines to liquorish devotion. In a sessional process with a gentleman in Mauchline—a Mr Gavin Hamilton—*Holy Willie* and his priest, Father Auld, after full hearing in the presbytery of Ayr, came off but second best; owing partly to the oratorical powers of Mr Robert Aiken, Mr Hamilton's counsel; but chiefly to Mr Hamilton's being one of the most irreproachable and truly respectable characters in the county. On losing the process, the muse overheard him [*Holy Willie*] at his devotions, as follows:—

O THOU, who in the heavens does dwell,
Who, as it pleases best Thysel,
Sends ane to heaven an' ten to hell,
A' for thy glory,
And no for ony gude or ill
They've done afore Thee !¹

I bless and praise Thy matchless might,
When thousands Thou hast left in night,

¹ It is instructive to note how differently the respective biographers of the poet have expressed their sentiments regarding this powerful production. The Rev. Hamilton Paul and the Rev. Dr Waddell, seem to invite the friends of religion to bless the memory of the poet who took such a judicious method of "leading the liberal mind to a rational view of the nature of prayer." Dr Waddell says that the poem "implies no irreverence whatever on the writer's part; but on the contrary, manifests his own profoundest detestation of, and contempt for, every variety of imposture in the name of religion." His brother divine regards the poem as "merely a metrical version of every prayer that is offered up by those who call themselves of the pure reformed church of Scotland." Motherwell, on the other hand, styles

That I am here afore Thy sight,
For gifts an' grace
A burning and a shining light
To a' this place.

What was I, or my generation,
That I should get sic exaltation,
I wha deserve most just damnation
For broken laws,
Five thousand years ere my creation,
'Thro' Adam's cause.

When frae my mither's womb I fell,
Thou might hae plungèd me in hell,
To gnash my gums, to weep and wail,
In burnin lakes,
Where damnèd devils roar and yell,
Chain'd to their stakes.

Yet I am here a chosen sample,
To show thy grace is great and ample ;
I'm here a pillar o' Thy temple,
Strong as a rock,
A guide, a buckler, and example,
To a' thy flock.

O L—d, Thou kens what zeal I bear,
When drinkers drink, an' swearers swear,

it "by far the most reprehensible of Burns' pieces, and one which should never have been written." Cunningham timidly shelters himself behind the words of Sir Walter Scott, by calling it a "too daring poem," and "a piece of satire more exquisitely severe than any which Burns ever afterwards wrote." Chambers describes it as "a satire nominally aimed at *Holy Willie*, but in reality a burlesque of the extreme doctrinal views of the party to which that hypocrite belonged." Many will agree with Sir Harris Nicolas in saying that "the reverend admirers of the poem appear to have compounded with their consciences for being pleased with a piece showing little veneration for religion itself, because it ridicules the mistaken zeal of an opposite sect."

An' singin' there, an' dancin' here,
Wi' great and sma' ;
For I am keepit by Thy fear
Free frae them a'.

But yet, O L—d ! confess I must,
At times I'm fashed * wi' fleshly lust :
An' sometimes, too, in warldly trust,
Vile self gets in ;
But Thou remembers we are dust,
Defil'd wi' sin.

O L—d ! yestreen, Thou kens, wi' Meg—
Thy pardon I sincerely beg,
O ! may't ne'er be a livin plague
To my dishonour,
An' I'll ne'er lift a lawless leg
Again upon her.

Besides, I farther maun allow,
Wi' Leezie's lass three times I trow—
But L—d, that Friday I was fou,
When I cam near her ;
Or else, Thou kens, Thy servant true
Wad never steer her.

Maybe Thou lets this fleshly thorn
Buffet Thy servant e'en and morn,
Lest he owre proud and high shou'd turn,
That he's sae gifted :
If sae, Thy han' maun e'en be borne,
Until Thou lift it.

L—d, bless Thy chosen in this place,
For here thou hast a chosen race :

* troubled.

But G—d confound their stubborn face,
An' blast their name,
Wha bring Thy elders to disgrace
An' public shame.

L—d, mind Gaw'n Hamilton's deserts ;
He drinks, an' swears, an' plays at carts,
Yet has sae mony takin arts,
Wi' great and sma',
Frae G—d's ain priest the people's hearts
He steals awa.

An' when we chasten'd him therefor,
Thou kens how he bred sic a splore,*
An' set the warld in a roar
O' laughing at us ;—
Curse Thou his basket and his store,
Kail an' potatoes.

L—d, hear my earnest cry and pray'r,
Against that Presbyt'ry o' Ayr ;
Thy strong right hand, L—d, make it bare
Upo' their heads ;
L—d visit them, an' dinna spare,
For their misdeeds.

O L—d, my G—d ! that glib-tongu'd Aiken,
My vera heart and flesh are quakin,
To think how we stood sweatin, shakin,
An' p—'d wi' dread,
While he, wi' hingin lip an' snakin,†
Held up his head.

L—d, in Thy day o' vengeance try him,
L—d, visit them wha did employ him,

* disturbance

† exulting and sneering.

And pass not in Thy mercy by them,
Nor hear their pray'r,
But for Thy people's sake destroy them,
An' dinna spare.

But, L—d, remember me an' mine
Wi' mercies temporal an' divine,
That I for grace an' gear may shine,
Excell'd by nane,
And a' the glory shall be thine,
Amen, Amen !

[The "Argument," or introduction, printed at the head of this poem, is from the bard's own pen. The "sessional process" referred to commenced August 1784, when the name of Gavin Hamilton, friend and landlord of the poet, was included in a list of members who were threatened to be barred from the communion table for "habitual neglect of church ordinances." Hamilton addressed a letter to the kirk session, telling them that they had no just grounds of offence against him, and that they must be conscious of proceeding purely on "private pique and ill-nature." Hamilton finding the kirk session obstinate, and inclined to treat him still more offensively, appealed to the presbytery of Ayr for protection, and in January 1785, he obtained a decree of that court ordering the erasure of the session minutes complained of. It was at this stage—as we apprehend—that the case of Burns "overheard *Holy Willie* at his devotions;" but that person did not content himself with "prayers" merely, for Auld and his confederates refused to obey the presbyterial order, and made appeal to the mod. The process there did not close till July 1785, when the affair was compromised by Hamilton's acceptance of a certificate from his kirk session absolving him to be "free from all ground of church censure."

EPITAPH ON HOLY WILLIE.

HERE Holy Willie's sair worn clay
Taks up its last abode ;
His saul has ta'en some other way,
I fear, the left-hand road.
Stop ! there he is, as sure's a gun,
Poor, silly body, see him ;
Nae wonder he's as black's the grun,
Observe wha's standing wi' him.

Your brunstane devilship, I see
 Has got him there before ye ;
 But haud your nine-tail cat a wee,
 Till ance you've heard my story.

Your pity I will not implore,
 For pity ye have nane ;
 Justice, alas ! has gi'en him o'er,
 And mercy's day is gane.

But hear me, Sir, deil as ye are,
 Look something to your credit ;
 A coof like him wad stain your name,
 If it were kent ye did it.

[The name of the hero of this and the preceding satire was William Fisher, a leading elder in the parish church of Mauchline. It appears that the sins of the hoary hypocrite found him out. He died in a ditch by the roadside, into which he had fallen on his way home from a debauch. Father Auld and he repose in Mauchline kirkyard, almost side by side.]

DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK.

A TRUE STORY.

SOME books are lies frae end to end,
 And some great lies were never penn'd :
 Ev'n ministers they hae been kenn'd,
 In holy rapture,
 A rousing whid * at times to vend,
 And nail't wi' Scripture.

But this that I am gaun to tell,
 Which lately on a night befel,
 Is just as true's the Deil's in hell
 Or Dublin city :
 That e'er he nearer comes oursel
 'S a muckle pity.

* fib.

The clachan yill * had made me canty,
 I was na fou, but just had plenty ;
 I stacher'd whyles, † but yet took tent ay
 To free the ditches ;
 An' hillocks, stanes, an' bushes, kenn'd ay
 Frae ghaists an' witches.

The rising moon began to glowre
 The distant *Cumnock* hills out-owre :
 To count her horns, ¹ wi' a' my pow'r,
 I set mysel ;
 But whether she had three or four,
 I cou'd na tell.

I was come round about the hill,
 An' todlin down on *Willie's mill*,
 Setting my staff wi' a' my skill,
 To keep me sicker ; ‡
 Tho' leeward whyles, § against my will,
 I took a bicker.

I there wi' *Something* did forgather,
 That pat me in an eerie swither ; ||
 An' awfu' scythe, out-owre ae shouter,
 Clear-dangling, hang ;
 A three-tae'd leister ¶ on the ither
 Lay, large an' lang.

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa,
 The queerest shape that e'er I saw,

* village ale.
 ‡ at times.

† staggered at times.
 || timid hesitation.

‡ secure.
 ¶ fish-spear.

¹ Cumnock hills lie south-east from Tarbolton ; and hence, it is argued by Waddell, the moon could not be seen in *crescent* from the poet's standpoint. The learned critic has forgot the "clachan yill."

For fient a wame * it had ava ;
 And then its shanks,
 They were as thin, as sharp an' sma'
 As cheeks o' branks.†

'Guid-een,' quo' I ; 'Friend ! hae ye been mawin,
 'When ither folk are busy sawin !'¹
 It seem'd to mak a kind o' stan',
 But naething spak ;
 At length, says I, 'Friend ! whare ye gaun ?
 'Will ye go back?'

It spak right howe, ‡—'My name is *Death*,
 'But be na' fley'd.' §—Quoth I, 'Guid faith,
 'Ye're may be come to stap my breath ;
 'But tent me, billie ;
 'I red || ye weel, tak care o' skaith, ¶
 'See, there's a gully !'^{**}

'Gudeman,' quo' he, 'put up your whittle, ††
 'I'm no designed to try its mettle ;
 'But if I did, I wad be kittle ‡‡
 'To be mislear'd ; §§
 'I wad na mind it, no that spittle
 'Out-owre my beard.' |||

'Weel, weel !' says I, 'a bargain be't ;
 'Come, gies your hand, an' sae we're gree't ;
 'We'll ease our shanks an tak a seat—
 'Come, gies your news ;
 'This while ye hae been mony a gate,
 'At mony a house.'²

* belly.	† wooden bridle.	‡ hollow.	§ afraid
advise.	¶ harm.	** clasp-knife.	†† knife
‡‡ itchingly apt.	§§ unmannerly.	chin.	

¹ This rencontre happened in seed-time, 1785.—*R. B.*

² An epidemical fever was then raging in that country.—*R. B.*

'Ay, ay !' quo' he, an' shook his head,
 'It's e'en a lang, lang time indeed
 'Sin' I began to nick the thread,
 'An' choke the breath :
 'Folk maun do something for their bread,
 'An' sae maun *Death*.

 'Sax thousand years are near-hand fled
 'Sin' I was to the butching bred,
 'An' mony a scheme in vain's been laid,
 'To stap or scar me ;
 'Till ane *Hornbook's*¹ ta'en up the trade,
 'And faith ! he'll waur me.

 'Ye ken *Jock Hornbook* i' the Clachan *
 'Deil mak his king's-hood in a spleuchan !†
 'He's grown sae weel acquaint wi' *Buchan* ²
 'And ither chaps,
 'The weans haud out their fingers laughin,
 'An' pouk ‡ my hips.

 'See, here's a scythe, an' there's a dart,
 'They hae pierc'd mony a gallant heart ;
 'But Doctor *Hornbook* wi' his art
 'An' cursed skill,
 'Has made them baith no worth a f—t,
 'D—n'd haet they'll kill !

 'Twas but yestreen, nae farther gane,
 'I threw a noble throw at ane ;

* village.

† purse or pouch.

‡ pull.

This gentleman, Dr Hornbook, is professionally a brother of the sovereign order of the ferula ; but, by intuition and inspiration, is at once an apothecary, surgeon, and physician.—*R. B.*

¹ Buchan's Domestic Medicine.—*R. B.* Dr Wm. Buchan died in 1805.

‘ Wi’ less, I’m sure, I’ve hundreds slain ;
 ‘ But deil-ma’ care,
‘ It just play’d dirl on the bane,
 ‘ But did nae mair.

‘ *Hornbook* was by, wi’ ready art,
‘ An’ had sae fortify’d the part,
‘ That when I lookèd to my dart,
 ‘ It was sae blunt,
‘ Fient haet o’t wad hae pierc’d the heart
 ‘ Of a kail-run.*

‘ I drew my scythe in sic a fury,
‘ I near-hand cowpitt† wi’ my hurry,
‘ But yet the bauld *Apothecary*
 ‘ Withstood the shock ;
‘ I might as weel hae try’d a quarry
 ‘ O’ hard whin rock.

‘ Ev’n them he canna get attended,
‘ Altho’ their face he ne’er had kend it,
‘ Just —— in a kail-blade, an’ send it,
 ‘ As soon’s he smells ’t,
‘ Baith their disease, and what will mend it,
 ‘ At once he tells ’t.

‘ And then a’ doctor’s saws an’ whittles,
‘ Of a’ dimensions, shapes, an’ mettles,
‘ A’ kinds o’ boxes, mugs, an’ bottles,
 ‘ He’s sure to hae ;
‘ Their Latin names as fast he rattles
 ‘ As A B C.

‘ Calces o’ fossils, earths, and trees ;
‘ True sal-marinum o’ the seas ;

* cabbage-stalk.

† overbalanced.

‘The farina of beans an’ pease,
 ‘He has’t in plenty;
 ‘Aqua-fontis, what you please,
 ‘He can content ye.

‘Forbye some new, uncommon weapons,
 ‘Urinus spiritus of capons;
 ‘Or mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings,
 ‘Distill’d *per se*;
 ‘Sal-alkali o’ midge-tail-clippings,
 ‘And mony mae.’

‘Waes me for *Johnie Ged’s*¹ *Hole* now,
 Quoth I, ‘if that thae news be true!
 ‘His braw calf-ward* whare gowan† grew,
 ‘Sae white and bonie,
 ‘Nae doubt they’ll rive it wi’ the plew;
 ‘They’ll ruin *Johnie*!’

The creature grain’d an eldritch‡ laugh,
 And says, ‘Ye needna yoke the pleugh,
 ‘Kirkyards will soon be till’d eneugh,
 ‘Tak ye nae fear:
 ‘They’ll a’ be trench’d wi mony a sheugh,§
 ‘In twa-three year.

‘Whare I kill’d ane, a fair strae death,||
 ‘By loss o’ blood or want of breath,
 ‘This night I’m free to tak my aith,
 ‘That *Hornbook’s* skill
 ‘Has clad a score i’ their last claith,
 ‘By drap an’ pill.

grazing plot. † daisies. ‡ ghastly. § furrow. || death-bed exit.

¹ The grave-digger.—R. B.

‘ An honest wabster to his trade,
‘ Whase wife’s twa nieves were scarce weel-bred,
‘ Gat tippence-worth to mend her head,
 When it was sair ;
‘ The wife slade cannie to her bed,
 ‘ But ne’er spak mair.

‘ A country laird had ta’en the batts,
‘ Or some curmurring in his guts,
‘ His only son for *Hornbook* sets,
 ‘ An’ pays him well :
‘ The lad, for twa guid gimmer-pets,*
 ‘ Was laird himsel.

‘ A bonie lass—ye kend her name—
‘ Some ill-brewn drink had hov’d her wame ;
‘ She trusts hersel, to hide the shame,
 ‘ In *Hornbook’s* care ;
‘ *Horn* sent her aff to her lang hame,
 ‘ To hide it there.

‘ That’s just a swatch† o’ *Hornbook’s* way ;
‘ Thus goes he on from day to day,
‘ Thus does he poison, kill, an’ slay,
 ‘ An’s weel paid for’t ;
‘ Yet stops me o’ my lawfu’ prey,
 ‘ Wi’ his d—n’d dirt :

‘ But, hark ! I’ll tell you of a plot,
‘ Tho’ dinna ye be speakin’ o’t ;
‘ I’ll nail the self-conceited sot,
 ‘ As dead’s a herrin ;
‘ Niest time we meet, I’ll wad a groat,
 ‘ He gets his fairin !’

* young ewes.

† sample.

But just as he began to tell,
 The auld kirk-hammer strak the bell
 Some wee short hour ayont the *twa*,
 Which rais'd us baith :
 I took the way that pleas'd mysel,
 And sae did *Death*.

[The author himself has fixed the date of this poem, which, like Tam-o'-Shanter, was struck off almost complete at one heat; for Gilbert has told us that his brother repeated the stanzas to him on the day following the night of a *tiff* with Wilson at the mason lodge. John Wilson, parish schoolmaster at Tarbolton, had also a small grocery shop where he sold common drugs, and gave occasional medical advice in simple cases, and thus became a person of some importance in the village. According to Mr Lockhart he was not merely compelled, through the force and widely-spread popularity of this attractive satire, to close his shop, but to abandon his school-craft also, in consequence of his pupils, one by one, deserting him. "Hornbook" removed to Glasgow, and by dint of his talents and assiduity, at length obtained the respectable situation of session-clerk of Gorbals parish. He died January 13, 1839. Many a time in his latter days he has been heard, "over a bowl of punch, to bless the lucky hour when the dominie of Tarbolton provoked the castigation of Robert Burns."]

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK,

AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD.—APRIL 1, 1785.

WHILE briers an' woodbines budding green,
 An' paitricks sraichin loud at e'en,
 An' morning poussie whiddin* seen,
 Inspire my muse,
 This freedom, in an unknown frien',
 I pray excuse.

On Fasten-e'en† we had a rockin,‡
 To ca' the crack§ and weave our stockin ;

* a hare in quick motion.

† gathering.

I.

F

† the night before Lent.

‡ chat.

And there was muckle fun and jokin,
 Ye need na doubt;
 At length we had a hearty yokin,*
 At 'sang about."

There was ae sang, amang the rest.
 Aboon them a' it pleas'd me best,
 That some kind husband had addrest
 To some sweet wife;
 It thirl'd† the heart-strings thro' the breast,
 A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought describ'd sae weel,
 What gen'rous, manly bosoms feel;
 Thought I, "can this be Pope, or Steele,
 Or Beattie's wark?"
 They tauld me 'twas an odd kind chiel
 About Muirkirk.

It pat me fidgin-fain‡ to hear't,
 An' sae about him there I speir't;§
 Then a' that kent him round declar'd
 He had *ingine*; ||
 That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,
 It was sae fine:

That, set him to a pint of ale,
 An' either douce ¶ or merry tale,
 Or rhymes an' sangs he'd made himsel,
 Or witty catches—
 'Tween Inverness an' Teviotdale,
 He had few matches.

* set-to.
 § asked.

† thrilled.
 || genius.

‡ excitedly eager.
 ¶ grave.

Then up I gat, an' swoor an aith,
 Tho' I should pawn my pleugh an' graith, *
 Or die a cadger† pownie's death,
 At some dyke-back,
 A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith,
 To hear your crack.‡

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
 Amaist as soon as I could spell,
 I to the crambo-jingle§ fell ;
 Tho' rude an' rough---
 Yet crooning|| to a body's scl,
 Does weel eneugh.

I am nae poet, in a sense ;
 But just a rhymer like by chance.
 An' hae to learning nae pretence ;
 Yet, what the matter ?
 Whene'er my muse does on me glance,
 I jingle at her.

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
 And say, "how can you e'er proposc,
 You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
 To mak a sang?"
 But, by your leave, my learned foes,
 Ye're maybe wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your schools—
 Your Latin names for horns an' stools?
 If honest Nature made you fools,
 What sairs ¶ your grammars?
 Ye'd better taen up spades and shoals,
 Or knappin-hammers.

* harness.

† hawker.

; chat.

§ rhyming syllables.

|| humming.

¶ serves.

A set o' dull, conceited hashes
Confuse their brains in college-classes !
They gang in stirks,* and come out asses,
Plain truth to speak ;
An' syne they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek !

Gie me ae spark o' nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire ;
Then tho' I drudge thro' dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My muse, tho' hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

O for a spunk o' Allan's† glee,
Or Fergusson's, the bauld an' slee,
Or bright Lapraik's, my friend to be,
If I can hit it !
That would be lear ‡ enough for me,
If I could get it.

Now, sir, if ye hae friends enow,
Tho' real friends I b'lieve are few ;
Yet, if your catalogue be fu',
I'se no insist :
But, gif ye want ae friend that's true,
I'm on your list.

I winna blaw about mysel,
As ill I like my fauts to tell ;
But friends, an' folk that wish me well,
They sometime roose § me ;
Tho' I maun own, as mony still
As far abuse me.

'There's ae wee faut they whiles lay to me,
I like the lasses—Gude forgie me !

* young bullocks.

† Allan Ramsay's.

‡ learning.

§ praise.

For mony a plack * they wheedle † frae me
 At dance or fair ;
 Maybe some ither thing they gie me,
 They weel can spare.

But Mauchline Race ¹ or Mauchline Fair,
 I should be proud to meet you there :
 We'se gie ae night's discharge to care,
 If we forgather ;
 An' hae a swap ‡ o' rhymin-ware
 Wi' ane anither.

The four-gill chap, we'se gar him clatter,
 An' kirsen § him wi' reekin water ;
 Syne we'll sit down an' tak our whitter, ||
 To cheer our heart ;
 An' faith, we'se be acquainted better
 Before we part.

Awa ye selfish, warly race,
 Wha think that havins, ¶ sense, an' grace,
 Ev'n love an' friendship should give place
 To catch-the-plack !
 I dinna like to see your face,
 Nor hear your crack.

But ye whom social pleasure charms
 Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms,
 Who hold your being on the terms,
 " Each aid the others,"
 Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
 My friends, my brothers !

* coin.

† coax.

‡ an exchange.

§ baptise.

|| refreshment.

¶ manners.

¹ The race-course at Mauchline was on the high road near the poet's farm.

She's gien me mony a jirt * an' fleg,†
 Sin' I could striddle owre a rig ;
 But, by the L—d, tho' I should beg
 Wi' lyart ‡ pow,
 I'll laugh an sing, an' shake my leg,
 As lang's I dow !§

Now comes the sax-an-twentieth simmer
 I've seen the bud upo' the timmer,
 Still persecuted by the limmer
 Frae year to year ;
 But yet, despite the kittle kimmer,||
 I, Rob, am here.

Do ye envy the city gent,
 Behint a kist ¶ to lie an' sklent ; **
 Or purse-proud, big wi' cent. per cent.
 An' muckle wame,
 In some bit brugh to represent
 A bailie's name?

Or is't the paughty †† feudal thane,
 Wi' ruff'd sark an' glancing cane,
 Wha thinks himsel nae sheep-shank bane,
 But lordly stalks ;
 While caps and bonnets aff are taen,
 As by he walks?

“ O Thou wha gies us each guid gift !
 Gie me o' wit an' sense a lift,
 Then turn me, if Thou please adrift,
 Thro' Scotland wide ;
 Wi' cits nor lairds I wadna shift,
 In a' their pride !”

* jerk.

† fright.

‡ grey

§ am able.

|| fickle gossip.

¶ chest or counter.

** tell lies and prevaricate.

†† supercilious.

Were this the charter of our state,
"On pain o' hell be rich an' great,"
Damnation then would be our fate,
 Beyond remead ;
But, thanks to heaven, that's no the gate
 We learn our creed.

For thus the royal mandate ran,
When first the human race began ;
"The social, friendly, honest man,
 Whate'er he be—
'Tis *he* fulfils great Nature's plan,
 And none but he."

O mandate glorious and divine !
The followers o' the ragged nine¹—
Poor, thoughtless devils—yet may shine
 In glorious light ;
While sordid sons o' Mammon's line
 Are dark as night !

Tho' here they scrape, an' squeeze, an growl,
Their worthless nievefu' of a soul
May in some future carcase howl,
 The forest's fright ;
Or in some day-detesting owl
 May shun the light.

Then may Lapraik and Burns arise,
To reach their native, kindred skies,
And sing their pleasures, hopes an' joys,
 In some mild sphere ;
Still closer knit in friendship's ties,
 Each passing year !

¹ [Motherwell, without a word of comment, altered this reading to "ragged followers o' the Nine," which certainly seems a more consistent one. Those daughters of Jove surely wore decent drapery.]

Yet when a tale comes i' my head,
Or lassies gie my heart a screed *—
As whiles they're like to be my dead,
(O sad disease !)

I kittle † up my rustic reed ;
It gies me ease.

Auld Coila, ‡ now, may fidge § fu' fain,
She's gotten poets o' her ain ;
Chiels || wha their chanter's ¶ winna hain,*
But tune their lays,
Till echoes a' resound again
Her weel-sung praise.

Nae poet thought her worth his while,
To set her name in measur'd style ;
She lay like some unkenn'd-of isle
Beside New Holland,
Or whare wild-meeting oceans boil
Besouth Magellan.

Ramsay an' famous Fergusson
Gied Forth an' Tay a lift aboon ;
Yarrow an' Tweed, to monie a tune,
Owre Scotland rings ;
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, an' Doon
Naebody sings.

Th' Illissus, Tiber, Thames, an' Seine,
Glide sweet in monie a tunefu' line:
But, Willie, set your fit to mine,
An' cock your crest;
We'll gar our streams an' burnies shine
Up wi' the best!

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' fells, *
 Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,
 Her banks an' braes, her dens and dells,
 Whare glorious Wallace
 Aft bure the gree, † as story tells,
 Frae Suthron billies.

At Wallace' name, what Scottish blood
 But boils up in a spring-tide flood !
 Oft have our fearless fathers strode
 By Wallace' side,
 Still pressing onward, red-wat-shod,
 Or glorious dy'd !

O sweet are Coila's haughs ‡ an' woods,
 When lintwhites § chant amang the buds,
 And jinkin hares, in amorous whids, ||
 Their loves enjoy ;
 While thro' the braes the cushat croods ¶
 With wailfu' cry !

Ev'n winter bleak has charms to me,
 When winds rave thro' the naked tree ;
 Or frosts on hills of Ochiltree
 Are hoary gray ;
 Or blinding drifts wild-furious flee, /
 Dark ning the day !

O Nature ! a' thy shews an' forms
 To feeling, pensive hearts hae charms !
 Whether the summer kindly warms,
 Wi' life an' light ;
 Or winter howls, in gusty storms,
 The lang, dark night !

* hill-country.

§ linnets.

† pre-eminence.

|| quick motion.

‡ holms, or level ground near river

¶ coos.

The muse, nae poet ever fand her,
 Till by himsel he learn'd to wander,
 Adown some trottin burn's meander,
 An' no think lang :
 O sweet to stray, an' pensive ponder
 A heart-felt sang !

The warly race may drudge an' drive,
 Hog-shouter, * jundie, † stretch, an' strive ;
 Let me fair Nature's face describe, ‡
 And I, wi' pleasure,
 Shall let the busy, grumbling hive
 Bum owre their treasure.

Fareweel, " my rhyme-composing " brither !
 We've been owre lang unkenn'd to ither :
 Now let us lay our heads thegither,
 In love fraternal :
 May envy wallop in a tether,
 Black fiend, infernal !

While Highlandmen hate tolls an' taxes ;
 While moorlan herds like guid, fat braxies ; §
 While terra firma, on her axis,
 Diurnal turns ;
 Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
 In Robert Burns.¹

pearance of flock of sheep driven.
 ead sheep, a perquisite of the herd.

† jog.

§ perceive.

This is perhaps the solitary instance of the poet writing his name with syllable prior to April 14, 1786. The closing stanza of the second le to Lapraik shows the short spelling, but that verse was so altered the date referred to. The original MS. of the present poem has not found.

POSTSCRIPT.

MY memory's no worth a preen ;
 I had amaist forgotten clean,
 Ye bade me write you what they mean
 By this 'new-light,'¹
 'Bout which our herds sae aft hae been
 Maist like to fight.

In days when mankind were but callans *
 At grammar, logic, an' sic talents,
 They took nae pains their speech to balance,
 Or rules to gie ;
 But spak their thoughts in plain, braid lallans,†
 Like you or me.

In thae auld times, they thought the moon,
 Just like a sark,‡ or pair o' shoon,§
 Wore by degrees, till her last roon||
 Gaed past their viewin ;
 An' shortly after she was done
 They gat a new ane.

This passed for certain, undisputed ;
 It ne'er cam i' their heads to doubt it,
 Till chieils gat up an' wad confute it,
 An' ca'd it wrang ;
 An' muckle din there was about it,
 Baith loud an' lang.

Some herds, weel learn'd upo' the beuk,
 Wad threap ¶ auld folk the thing misteuk ;

* boys.

† Lowland speech.

‡ shirt.

§ shoes.

|| shred.

¶ assert.

¹ *New-Light* is a cant phrase in the West of Scotland for those religious opinions which Dr Taylor of Norwich has defended so strenuously.—R.

For 'twas the auld moon turn'd a neuk *
 An' out o' sight,
 An' backlins-comin to the leuk,
 She grew mair bright.

This was deny'd, it was affirm'd ;
 The herds and hissels † were alarm'd ;
 The rev'rend gray-beards rav'd an' storm'd,
 That beardless laddies
 Should think they better were inform'd,
 Than their auld daddies.

Frae less to mair, it gaed to sticks ;
 Frae words an' aiths, to clours ‡ an' nicks ; §
 An monie a fallow gat his licks,
 Wi' hearty crunt ; ||
 An' some, to learn them for their tricks,
 Were hang'd an' brunt.

This game was play'd in mony lands,
 An' "auld-light" caddies ¶ bure sic hands,
 That faith, the youngsters took the sands
 Wi' nimble shanks ;
 Till lairds forbad, by strict commands,
 Sic bluidy pranks.

But "new-light" herds gat sic a cove,*
 Folk thought them ruin'd stick-an-stowe ; ††
 Till now, amaist-on ev'ry knowe
 Ye'll find ane plac'd ;
 An' some, their "new-light" fair avow,
 Just quite barefac'd.

Nae doubt the "auld-light" flocks are bleatin ;
 Their zealous herds are vex'd and sweatin ;

* corner. † flocks or droves. ‡ bruises. § cuts.
 ‖ knock on the head. ¶ messengers or apostles.
 ** humbling. †† completely.

Mysel, I've even seen them greetin
 Wi' girnin spite,
 To hear the moon sae sadly lie'd on
 By word an' write.

But shortly they will cove the louns !*
 Some "auld-light" herds in neebor touns
 Are mind't, in things they ca' balloons,
 To tak a flight ;
 An' stay ae month amang the moons
 An' see them right.

Guid observation they will gie them ;
 An' when the auld moon's gaun to lea'e them,
 The hindmost shaird,† they'll fetch it wi' them,
 Just i' their pouch ;
 An' when the "new-light" billies see them,
 I think they'll crouch !

Sae, ye observe that a' this clatter
 Is naething but a "moonshine matter ;"
 But tho' dull prose-folk Latin splatter
 In logic tulyie,
 I hope we bardies ken some better
 Than mind sic brulyie.

[William Simson was parish schoolmaster at the small village of Ochiltree situated on the left bank of the river Lugar, at a distance of five miles south from the poet's farm. He appears to have introduced himself to Burns by sending him a complimentary letter, after having seen some of his poems in manuscript, particularly the "Holy Tulyie," to which Burns' postscript specially applies. In 1788, Simson was appointed parish teacher in the town of Cumnock, four miles farther up the Lugar, where he continued till his death in 1815.]

* humble the rascals.

† shred.

ONE NIGHT AS I DID WANDER.

A FRAGMENT.—MAY 1785.

ONE night as I did wander,
 When corn begins to shoot,
 I sat me down to ponder,
 Upon an auld tree-root:
 Auld Ayr ran by before me,
 And bicker'd to the seas;
 A cushat * crooded † o'er me,
 That echoed through the braes.

This fragment seems to have been intended as the opening of a poem similar in style to "Man was made to mourn." The scenery indicated is unlike that of Ballochmyle or Barskimming, the two nearest points where the poet could reach the river Ayr from Mauchline.]

FRAGMENT OF SONG—"MY JEAN!"

THO' cruel fate should bid us part,
 Far as the pole and line,
 Her dear idea round my heart,
 Should tenderly entwine.
 Tho' mountains rise, and deserts howl,
 And oceans roar between;
 Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
 I still would love my Jean.

The affection for Jean Armour displayed here is quite in keeping with the language and sentiment expressed in the "Epistle to Davie." Indeed comparing these, the reader will naturally conclude that they must have been composed about the same date. In the one, we find the poet-lover thus expressing himself—

"Her dear idea brings relief and solace to my breast;"

* wild pigeon.

† cooed.

I.

G

and here he says, almost in the identical words—

“Her dear idea round my heart shall tenderly entwine.”

Again, in the “Epistle,” he invokes heaven to witness that—

“The life-blood streaming through my heart,
Or my more dear immortal part,
Is not more fondly dear.”

And in this little song,—the first sketch of the world-famous “Of a’ airts,” &c.—the same language is employed.—

“Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
I still would love my Jean.”]

SONG—RANTIN, ROVIN ROBIN.

THERE was a lad was born in Kyle,*
But whatna day o’ whatna style,
I doubt it’s hardly worth the while
To be sae nice wi’ Robin.

Chor.—Robin was a rovin boy,
Rantin, rovin, rantin, rovin,
Robin was a rovin boy,
Rantin, rovin Robin !

Our monarch’s hindmost year but ane
Was five-and-twenty days begun,¹
’Twas then a blast o’ Janwar’ win’
Blew hansom † in on Robin.
Robin was, &c.

The gossip keekit‡ in his loof,§
Quo’ scho, “Wha lives will see the proof,
This waly || boy will be nae coof : ¶
I think we’ll ca’ him Robin.”
Robin was, &c.

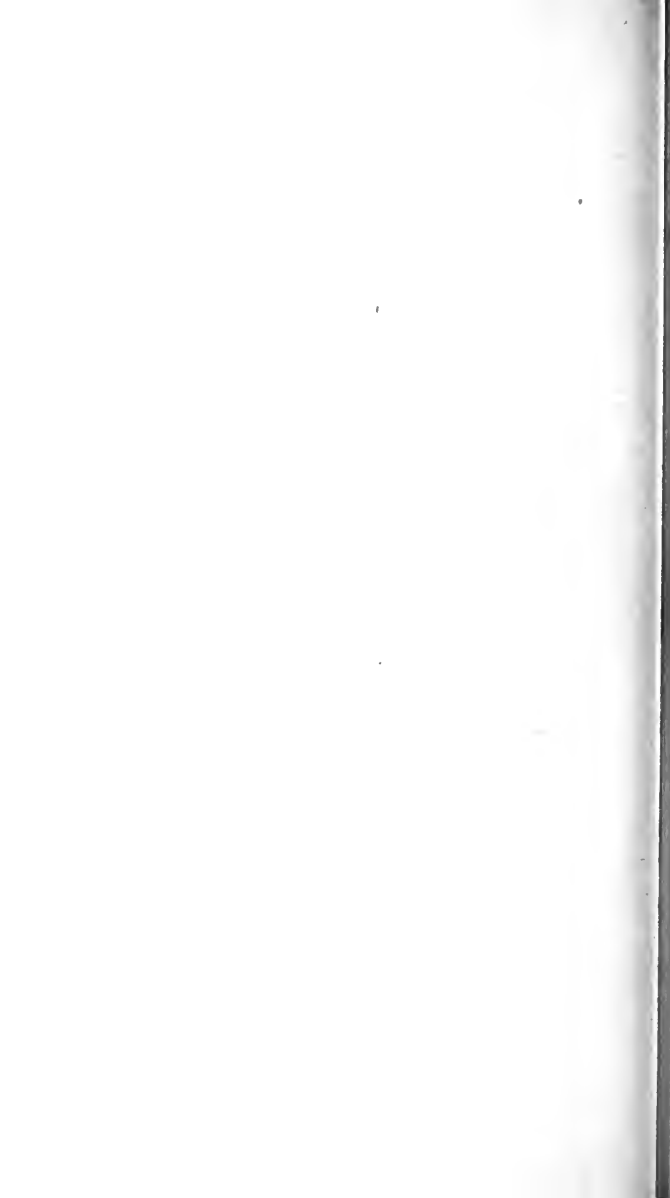
* The central district of Ayrshire.
§ palm.

† first gift.
|| goodly.

‡ looked.
¶ fool.

¹ Jan. 25, 1759, the date of my bardship’s vital existence.—K. B.





“ He’ll hae misfortunes great an’ sma’,
 But ay a heart aboon them a’,
 He’ll be a credit till us a’—
 We’ll a’ be proud o’ Robin.”
 Robin was, &c.

“ But sure as three times three mak nine,
 I see by ilka score and line,
 This chap will dearly like our kin’,
 So leeze me* on thee ! Robin.”
 Robin was, &c.

“ Guid faith,” quo’ scho, “ I doubt you, sir,
 Ye gar † the lasses * * *
 But twenty fauts ye may hae waur
 So blessins on thee ! Robin.”
 Robin was, &c.

[This song displays a vivid forecast of the author's coming fame. Dr. Addell, in the mistaken belief that it was composed in 1734, calls it “a perfect prophetic and pictorial idyll, which must be accepted as a very singular and truthful anticipation of his own future greatness.”]

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RUISSEAUX.¹

Now Robin lies in his last lair,
 He’ll gabble rhyme, nor sing nae mair ;
 Cauld poverty, wi’ hungry stare,
 Nae mair shall fear him ;
 Nor anxious fear, nor cankert care,
 E’er mair come near him.

* set my heart.

† make.

¹ Fr. for rivulets, or burns, a translation of his own name

To tell the truth, they seldom fash'd * him,
 Except the moment that they crush'd him ;
 For sune as chance or fate had hush'd 'em

Tho' e'er sae short,
 Then wi' a rhyme or sang he lash'd 'em,
 And thought it sport.

Tho' he was bred to kintra-wark,
 And counted was baith wight † and stark, ‡
 Yet that was never Robin's mark

To mak a man ;
 But tell him, he was learn'd and clark, §
 Ye roos'd ¶ him then !

[It seems highly probable that this elegy was intended to occupy the page of the Kilmarnock volume, but withdrawn when he had composed far superior "Poet's Epitaph," which so beautifully closes the work.]

EPISTLE TO JOHN GOLDIE, IN KILMARNOCK,

AUTHOR OF THE GOSPEL RECOVERED.—AUGUST 178

O GOWDIE, terror o' the whigs,
 Dread o' blackcoats and reverend wigs !
 Sour Bigotry on his last legs
 Girns an' looks back,
 Wishing the ten Egyptian plagues
 May seize you quick.

Poor gapin, glowrin Superstition !
 Wae's me, she's in a sad condition :
 Fye : bring *Black Jock*,¹ her state physician,
 To see her water :
 Alas, there's ground for great suspicion
 She'll ne'er get better.

* troubled. † strong. ‡ thorough, complete. § literar
 ¶ roused his ambition.

¹ The Rev. J. Russell, Kilmarnock.—R. B.

Enthusiasm's past redemption,
 Gane in a gallopin consumption :
 Not a' her quacks, wi' a' their gumption,³
 Can ever mend her ;
 Her feeble pulse gies strong presumption,
 She'll soon surrender.

Auld Orthodoxy lang did grapple,
 For every hole to get a stapple ; †
 But now she fetches at the thrapple,
 An' fights for breath ;
 Haste, gie her name up in the chapel,¹
 Near unto death.

It's you an' *Taylor*² are the chiet
 To blame for a' this black mischief ;
 But could the L—d's ain folk get leave,
 A toom tar barrel
 An' twa red peats wad bring relief,
 And end the quarrel.

For me, my skill's but very sma',
 An' skill in prose I've nane ava' ;
 But quietlenswise, ‡ between us twa,
 Weel may ye speed !
 And tho' they sud you sair misca',
 Ne'er fash § your head.

E'en swinge the dogs, and thresh them sicker ! ||
 The mair they squeel ay chap ¶ the thicker ;
 And still 'mang hands a hearty bicker
 O' something stout ;

* acuteness.

§ perplex.

† handful of thatch.

‡ with precision.

‡ in a quiet manner.

¶ lay on.

¹ Mr Russell's Kirk.—*R. B.*² Dr Taylor of Norwich.—*R. B.*

It gars an owthor's * pulse beat quicker,
And helps his wit.

There's naething like the honest nappy ; †
Whare'll ye e'er see men sae happy,
Or women sonsie, ‡ saft an sappy,
 'Tween morn and morn,
As them wha like to taste the drappie,
 In glass or horn?

I've seen me daez't § upon a time,
I scarce could wink or see a styme ; ||
Just ae hauf-mutchkin' ¶ does me prime,
 (Ought less, is little,)
Then back I rattle on the rhyme,
 As gleg's a whittle. **

[The person thus addressed was a note-worthy individual. His father was the miller at Craigmill on Cessnock water in Galston parish, where the future philosopher was born in 1717. He showed an early aptitude for science and mechanical skill, and soon became an adept in geometry, architecture, and astronomy. While yet a young man, he removed to Kilmarnock, where he carried on business, first as a cabinet-maker, and afterwards as an extensive wine and spirit merchant ; but all his leisure time was devoted to his favourite scientific pursuits and mechanical contrivance. In his religious views he was originally orthodox, and joined the Antiburgher congregation at Kilmaurs ; but, before he was fifty years old, his opinions underwent a radical change. These he carried much beyond the Arminianism of the New Light party. In 1780, he published his opinions in three 8vo volumes printed at Glasgow. These essays were extensively read, and the work was popularly termed "Gowdie's Bible."

At the date of Burns' epistle to him, Goldie was 68 years old. Whether the poet introduced himself by this means or had previously known him, is impossible to tell ; but certain it is that the bard relied much on Goldie's friendship and advice during his visits to Kilmarnock while his poems were at the press. He survived till 1811.]

* an author's.

† buxom.

¶ two gills, a half-pint.

‡ strong drink, generally applied to ale.

§ stupid.

|| the faintest form.

** sharp as a knife.

THIRD EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK.

GUID speed and furdur to you, Johnie,
 Guid health, hale han's an' weather bonie ;
 Now, when ye're nickin * down fu' cannie
 The staff o' bread,†
 May ye ne'er want a stoup o' bran'y
 To clear your head.

May Boreas never thresh your rigs,
 Nor kick your rickles ‡ aff their legs,
 Sendin the stuff o'er muirs an' hagg§
 Like drivin wrack ;
 But may the tapmost grain that wags
 Come to the sack.

I'm bizzie, too, an' skelpin at it,
 But bitter, daudin || showers hae wat it :
 Sae my auld stumpie pen I gat it
 Wi' muckle wark,
 An' took my jocteleg ¶ an' whatt** it,
 Like ony clark.

It's now twa month that I'm your debtor,
 For your braw, nameless, dateless letter,
 Abusin me for harsh ill-nature
 On holy men,
 While deil a hair yoursel ye're better,
 But mair profane.

But let the kirk-folk ring their bells,
 Let's sing about our noble sel's :

* cutting.

! ricks of cut grain.

¶ pen-knife.

† a Bible term for "bread, the staff of life."

§ mosses.

** cut.

|| pelting.

We'll cry nae jads frae heathen hills
 To help, or roose * us ;
 But browster wives an' whisky stills,
 They are the muses.

Your friendship, sir, I winna quat it,
 An' if ye mak' objections at it,
 Then hand in nieve † some day we'll knot it,
 An' witness take,
 An' when wi' usquabae we've wat it,
 It winna break.

But if the beast an branks be spar'd
 Till kye be gaun without the herd,
 And a' the vittell in the yard,
 And theekit ‡ right,
 I mean your ingle-side to guard
 Ae winter night.

Then muse-inspirin aquavitæ
 Shall mak us baith sae blythe and witty,
 Till ye forget ye're auld an' gatty, §
 And be as canty
 As ye were nine years less than thretty—
 Sweet ane an' twenty !

But stooks are cowpet || wi' the blast,
 And now the sinn keeks ¶ in the west,
 Then I maun rin amang the rest,
 An' quat my chanter ;
 Sae I subscribe mysel in haste,
 Yours, Rab the Ranter.

Sept. 13, 1785.

* inspire. † fist. ‡ covered in. § paunchy. || overturned. ¶ peeps

EPISTLE TO THE REV. JOHN M'MATH,
 INCLOSING A COPY OF "HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER," WHICH
 HE HAD REQUESTED, SEPT. 17, 1785.

WHILE at the stook the shearers * cow'r †
 To shun the bitter blaudin' ‡ show'r,
 Or in gulravage rinnin § scow'r ; ||
 To pass the time,
 To you I dedicate the hour
 In idle rhyme.

My musie, tir'd wi' mony a sonnet
 On gown, an' ban', an' douse ¶ black bonnet,
 Is grown right eerie ** now she's done it,
 Lest they shou'd blame her,
 An' rouse their holy thunder on it
 And anathem her.

I own 'twas rash, an' rather hardy,
 That I a simple, country bardie,
 Shou'd meddle wi' a pack sae sturdy,
 Wha, if they ken me,
 Can easy, wi' a single wordie,
 Louse h—ll upon me.

But I gae mäd at their grimaces,
 Their sighin, cantin, grace-proud faces,
 Their three-mile prayers, an' half-mile graces,
 Their raxin †† conscience,
 Whase greed, revenge, and pride disgraces
 Waur nor their nonsense.

* reapers.
 † escape.

† crouch.
 ¶ grave.

: beating.
 ** frightened.

§ confused scamper.
 †† stretching.

There's Gaw'n, misca'd waur than a beast,
 Wha has mair honor in his breast
 Than mony scores as guid's the priest
 Wha sae abused him :
 And may a bard no crack his jest
 What way they've us'd him ?

See him, the poor man's friend in need,¹
 The gentleman in word an' deed—
 An' shall his fame an' honor bleed
 By worthless skellums,*
 An' not a mause erect her head
 To cowe the blellums ?†

O Pope, had I thy satire's darts
 To gie the rascals their deserts,
 I'd rip their rotten, hollow hearts,
 An' tell aloud
 Their jugglin hocus-pocus arts
 To cheat the crowd.

God knows, I'm no the thing I shou'd be,
 Nor am I even the thing I cou'd be,
 But twenty times I rather would be
 An atheist clean,
 Than under gospel colors hid be
 Just for a screen.

An honest man may like a glass,
 An honest man may like a lass,
 But mean revenge, an' malice fause
 He'll still disdain,
 An' then cry zeal for gospel laws,
 Like some we ken.

* wretches.

† blusterers.

¹ This couplet was afterwards repeated, in the Dedication to Gavin Hamilton.

They take religion in their mouth ;
They talk o' mercy, grace, an' truth,
For what? to gie their malice skouth *
 On some puir wight,
An' hunt him down, owre right and ruth,
 To ruin streicht.

All hail, Religion ! maid divine !
Pardon a muse sae mean as mine,
Who in her rough imperfect line
 Thus daurs to name thee ;
To stigmatise false friends of thine
 Can ne'er defame thee.

Tho' blotch't and foul wi' mony a stain,
An' far unworthy of thy train,
With trembling voice I tune my strain,
 To join with those
Who boldly dare thy cause maintain
 In spite of foes :

In spite o' crowds, in spite o' mobs,
In spite o' undermining jobs,
In spite o' dark banditti stabs
 At worth an' merit,
By scoundrels, even wi' holy robes,
 But hellish spirit.

O Ayr ! my dear, my native ground,
Within thy presbyterial bound
A candid liberal band is found
 Of public teachers,
As men, as christians too, renown'd,
 An' manly preachers.

* scope.

Sir, in that circle you are nam'd ;
 Sir, in that circle you are fam'd ;
 An' some, by whom your doctrine's blam'd
 (Which gies ye honor)
 Even, sir, by them your heart's esteem'd,
 An' winning manner.

Pardon this freedom I have ta'en,
 An' if impertinent I've been,
 Impute it not, good sir, in ane
 Whase heart ne'er wrang'd ye,
 But to his utmost would befriend
 Ought that belang'd ye.

[The gentleman to whom the above epistle is addressed was assistant and successor to the Rev. Peter Wodrow, minister of Tarbolton. "Auld Wodrow," and his young helper, M'Math, are both complimented in "The Twa Herds," as able preachers, of the liberal or "moderate" stamp. In course of years, Mr M'Math fell into a morbid condition of mind, and eventually took to hard drinking, and died in the Isle of Mull, in 1825.

The two preceding epistles, dated within a few days of each other, specially refer to the bad harvest of 1785, which tended to discourage the poet at his farming, and perhaps to drive him to the muse for consolation. The signature to the first of these is a sobriquet borrowed from the popular song of "Maggie Lauder."]

SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE.

A BROTHER POET.

AULD NEIBOUR,

I'm three times doubly o'er your debtor,
 For your auld-farrant,* frien'ly letter ;
 Tho' I maun say't, I doubt ye flatter,
 Ye speak sae fair ;
 For my puir, silly, rhymin clatter
 Some less maun sair.†

* droll.

† scurve.

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle,
 Lang may your elbuck * jink an' diddle,
 To cheer you thro' the weary widdle
 O' war'ly cares ;
 Till bairns' bairns kindly cuddle †
 Your auld grey hairs.¹

But Davie, lad, I'm rede ye're glaikit ; ‡
 I'm tauld the muse ye hae negleckit ;
 An' gif it's sae, ye sud be licket §
 Until ye fyke ; ||
 Sic hauns ¶ as you sud ne'er be faiket,^{**}
 Be hain't †† wha like.

For me, I'm on Parnassus' brink,
 Rivin the words to gar ‡‡ them clink ;
 Whyles §§ daez't || wi' love, whyles daez't wi' drink,
 Wi' jads or masons ;
 An' whyles, but aye owre late, I think
 Braw sober lessons.

Of a' the thoughtless sons o' man,
 Commen' to me the bardie clan ;
 Except it be some idle plan
 O' rhymin clink—
 The devil-haet, that I sud ban—¶¶
 They ever think.

Nae thought, nae view, nae scheme o' livin,
 Nae cares to gie us joy or grievin,

* elbow.

† fondle.

‡ thoughtless.

§ beaten.

|| shrug.

¶ handy fellows.

** dispensed with.

†† saved from exertion.

‡‡ make.

§§ sometimes.

|| bewildered.

¶¶ swear.

¹ This verse was repeated almost verbatim in the Epistle to Major Logan

But just the pouchie put the nieve in,
 An' while ought's there,
 Then, hiltie, skiltie, we gae scribing,*
 An' fash† nae mair.

Leeze me‡ on rhyme ! it's ay a treasure,
 My chief, amaist my only pleasure ;
 At hame, a-fiel', at wark, or leisure,
 The muse, poor hizzie !
 Tho' rough an' raploch§ be her measure,
 She's seldom lazy.

Haud to the muse, my dainty Davie :
 The warl' may play you monie a shavie :
 But for the muse, she'll never leave ye,
 Tho' e'er sae pur,
 Na, even tho' limp in wi' the spavie
 Frae door to door.

[David Sillar, then a grocer in Irvine, stimulated to exertion by the success of Burns' first publication, was induced to imitate him, so far as could be done by typography and stationery. This epistle of Burns he introduced in the early pages of his book. Davie played on the violin a little : hence the reference in the second stanza.]

SONG.—YOUNG PEGGY BLOOMS.

YOUNG Peggy blooms our boniest lass,
 Her blush is like the morning,
 The rosy dawn, the springing grass,
 With early gems adorning.
 Her eyes outshine the radiant beams
 That gild the passing shower,
 And glitter o'er the crystal streams,
 And cheer each fresh'ning flower.

* careering.

† bother.

‡ commend me to.

§ coarse.

Her lips, more than the cherries bright,
A richer dye has graced them ;
They charm th' admiring gazer's sight,
And sweetly tempt to taste them ;
Her smile is as the evening mild,
When feather'd pairs are courting,
And little lambkins wanton wild,
In playful bands disporting.

Were Fortune lovely Peggy's foe,
Such sweetness would relent her ;
As blooming spring unbends the brow
Of surly savage Winter.
Detraction's eye no aim can gain,
Her winning pow'rs to lessen ;
And fretful Envy grins in vain
The poison'd tooth to fasten.

Ye Pow'rs of Honor, Love, and Truth,
From ev'ry ill defend her !
Inspire the highly-favour'd youth
The destinies intend her :
Still fan the sweet connubial flame
Responsive in each bosom ;
And bless the dear parental name
With many a filial blossom.

[The subject of this composition was Miss Peggy Kennedy, the daughter of a Carrick laird, and a relative of Mrs Gavin Hamilton. The poet was introduced to her when she was on a visit to the Hamiltons. She was then a blooming young woman of seventeen, and was understood to be betrothed to the youthful representative of the oldest and richest family in Galloway ; but, according to Chambers, "a train of circumstances lay in her path, which eventually caused the loss of her good name, and her early death." The poet enclosed the present verses to Miss Kennedy in a letter, concluding thus : "That the arrows of misfortune may never reach your heart—that the snares of villany may never beset you in the road of life—that INNOCENCE may hand you by the path of HONOUR to the dwelling of PEACE, is the sincere wish of him who has the honour to be," &c.]

SONG.—FAREWELL TO BALLOCHMYLE.

THE Catrine woods were yellow seen,
The flowers decay'd on Catrine lee,
Nae lav'rock sang on hillock green,
But nature sicken'd on the e'e.
Thro' faded groves Maria sang,
Hersel in beauty's bloom the while ;
And ay the wild-wood echoes rang,
Fareweel the braes o' Ballochmyle !

Low in your wintry beds, ye flowers,
Again ye'll flourish fresh and fair ;
Ye birdies dumb, in with'ring bowers,
Again ye'll charm the vocal air.
But here, alas ! for me nae mair
Shall birdie charm, or floweret smile ;
Fareweel the bonie banks of Ayr,
Fareweel, fareweel ! sweet Ballochmyle !

[Ballochmyle had long been the property of the Whitefoord family ; but, about this period, Sir John Whitefoord's misfortunes, arising chiefly through his connections with the Ayr Bank, obliged him to sell his estates. The "Maria" of this song was Miss Whitefoord, who afterwards became Mrs Cranstoun. The "Catrine Woods," and "Catrine Lea," are in the immediate neighbourhood of Ballochmyle, and were then the property of Professor Dugald Stewart. The fine scenery there is at the distance of about two miles from Mauchline, and was a favourite haunt of Burns while he lived at Mossgiel.]

FRAGMENT.—HER FLOWING LOCKS.

HER flowing locks, the raven's wing,
Adown her neck and bosom hing ;
How sweet unto that breast to cling,
And round that neck entwine her !

Her lips are roses wat wi' dew,
 O, what a feast, her bonie mou !
 Her cheeks a mair celestial hue,
 A crimson still diviner !

[Cunningham connects this little "artist's sketch" with a Mauchline incident ; and, if he is right in that respect, it seems probable that our poet intended it as a portrait of Miss Whitefoord.]

HALLOWEEN.¹

The following poem will, by many readers, be well enough understood: but for the sake of those who are unacquainted with the manners and traditions of the country where the scene is cast, notes are added, to give some account of the principal charms and spells of that night, so big with prophecy to the peasantry in the west of Scotland. The passion of prying into futurity makes a striking part of the history of human nature in its rude state, in all ages and nations ; and it may be some entertainment to a philosophic mind, if any such honour the author with a perusal, to see the remains of it among the more enlightened in our own.

"Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
 The simple pleasures of the lowly train ;
 To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
 One native charm, than all the gloss of art."

GOLDSMITH.

UPON that night, when fairies light
 On Cassilis Downans² dance,
 Or owre the lays,* in splendid blaze,
 On sprightly coursers prance ;
 Or for Colean the rout is ta'en,
 Beneath the moon's pale beams ;

* leas, or sloping fields.

¹ Is thought to be a night when witches, devils, and other mischief-making beings are all abroad on their baneful, midnight errands ; particularly those aerial people, the fairies, are said on that night, to hold a grand anniversary.—*R. B.*

² Certain little, romantic, rocky, green hills, in the neighbourhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassilis.—*R. B.*

There, up the Cove,¹ to stray an' rove,
 Among the rocks and streams
 To sport that night :

Amang the bonie winding banks,
 Where Doon rins, wimplin,* clear ;
 Where Bruce² ance ruled the martial ranks,
 An' shook his Carrick spear ;
 Some merry, friendly, country-folks
 Together did convene,
 To burn their nits, an' pou their stocks,
 An' haud their Halloween
 Fu' blythe that night.

The lasses feat,† an' cleanly neat,
 Mair braw than when they're fine ;
 Their faces blythe, fu' sweetly kythe,‡
 Hearts leal,§ an' warm, an' kin' :
 The lads sae trig, wi' wooer-babs||
 Weel-knotted on their garten ;
 Some unco blate,¶ an' some wi' gabs**
 Gar lasses' hearts gang startin
 Whyles fast at night.

Then, first an' foremost, thro' the kail,††
 Their 'stocks'³ maun a' be sought ance ;

* meandering.
 || love-knots.

† trim.
 ¶ shy.

‡ show.
 ** chatter.

§ loyal.
 †† cabbage-plot.

¹ A noted cavern near Colean House, called the Cove of Colean ; which as well as Cassilis Downans, is famed, in the country, for being a favourite haunt of the fairies.—*R. B.*

² The famous family of that name, the ancestor of ROBERT, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls of Carrick.—*R. B.*

³ The first ceremony of Halloween is, pulling each a "stock," or plant of kail. They must go out, hand in hand, with eyes shut, and pull the first they meet with : its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic of the size and shape of the grand object of all their spells—the husband or wife. If any "yird," or earth, stick to the root, that is "tocher," or fortune.

They steek their een, an' grape * an' wale †
 For muckle anes, an' straught anes.
 Poor hav'rel ‡ Will fell aff the drift,
 An' wandered thro' the 'bow-kail,'
 An' pou't for want o' better shift,
 A runt, was like a sow-tail
 Sae bow't § that night.

Then, straught or crooked, yird or nane,
 They roar an' cry a' throw'ther ;
 The vera wee-things, toddlin, || rin,
 Wi' stocks out owre their shouther :
 An' gif the custoc's sweet or sour,
 Wi' joctelegs ¶ they taste them ;
 Syne coziely, ** aboon the door,
 Wi' cannie care, they've plac'd them
 To lie that night.

The lasses staw †† frae 'mang them a',
 To pou their stalks o' corn ;¹
 But Rab slips out, an' jinks about,
 Behint the muckle thorn :
 He grippet Nelly hard an' fast ;
 Loud skirl'd ‡‡ a' the lassies ;

* grope.

† tottering.

‡ select.

¶ pocket-knives.

‡ half-witted

** snugly.

§ crooked.

†† stole away.

‡‡ screamed with laughter.

and the taste of the "custoc," that is, the heart of the stem, is indicative of the natural temper and disposition. Lastly, the stems, or, to give them their proper appellation, the "runts," are placed somewhere above the head of the door ; and the Christian names of people whom chance brings to the house are, according to the priority of placing the "runts," the names in question.—*R. B.*

¹ They go to the barnyard, and pull each, at three several times, a stalk of oats. If the third stalk wants the "top-pickle," that is, the grain at the top of the stalk, the party in question will come to the marriage-bed any day but a maid.—*R. B.*

But her tap-pickle maist was lost,
 Whan kiutlin in the 'fause-house'¹
 Wi' him that night.

The auld guid-wife's weel-hoordet nits²
 Are round an' round divided,
 An' mony lads an' lasses' fates
 Are there that night decided:
 Some kindle couthie,* side by side,
 An' burn thegither trimly;
 Some start awa wi' saucy pride,
 An' jump out owre the chimlie
 Fu' high that night.

Jean slips in twa, wi' tentie e'e;
 Wha 'twas, she wadna tell;
 But this is *Jock*, an' this is *me*,
 She says in to hersel:
 He bleez'd owre her, an' she owre him,
 As they wad never mair part;
 Till fuff! he started up the lum,
 And Jean had e'en a sàir heart
 To see't that night.

Poor Willie, wi' his bow-kail runt,
 Was brunt wi' primsie† Mallie;
 An' Mary, nae doubt, took the drunt,‡
 To be compar'd to Willie:

* agreeable.

† prudish.

‡ pet.

¹ When the corn is in a doubtful state, by being too green or wet, the stack-builder, by means of old timber, &c., makes a large apartment in the stack, with an opening in the side which is fairest exposed to the wind; this he calls a "fause-house."—*R. B.*

² Burning the nuts is a favourite charm. They name the lad and lass each particular nut, as they lay them in the fire; and according as they burn quietly together, or start from beside one another, the course and issue of the courtship will be.—*R. B.*

Mall's nit lap out, wi' pridesu' fling,
 An' her ain fit, it brunt it ;
 While Willie lap, an' swoor by 'jing,'
 'Twas just the way he wanted
 To be that night.

Nell had the 'fause-house' in her min',
 She pits hersel an' Rob in ;
 In loving bleeze they sweetly join,
 Till white in ase they're sobbin :
 Nell's heart was dancin at the view ;
 She whisper'd Rob to leuk for't :
 Rob, stownins,* prie'd † her bonie mou,
 Fu' cozie in the neuk for't,
 Unseen that night.

But Merran sat behint their backs,
 Her thoughts on Andrew Bell ;
 She lea'es them gashin ‡ at their cracks, §
 An' slips out-by hersel :
 She thro' the yard the nearest tak,
 An' for the kiln she goes then,
 An' darklins grapet for the 'bauks,' ||
 And in the 'blue-clue'¹ throws then,
 Right fear't that night.

An' ay she win't, ¶ an' ay she swat—
 I wat she made nae jaukin ; **

* stealthily.

† tasted.

‡ engaged.

§ conversation.

|| cross-beams.

¶ winded.

** delay.

¹ Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions: Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and darkling, throw into the pot "a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one; and, towards the latter end, something will hold the thread: demand, "Who holds?" *i.e.*, who holds? and answer will be returned from the kiln-pot, naming the christian and surname of your future spouse.—*R. B.*

Till something held within the pat,
 Guid L—d ! but she was quaukin !
 But whether 'twas the deil himsel,
 Or whether 'twas a bauk-en',
 Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
 She did na wait on talkin
 To spier that night.

Wee Jenny to her graunie says,
 "Will ye go wi' me, graunie ?
 I'll eat the apple at the glass,¹
 I gat frae uncle Johnie :"
 She fuff't her pipe wi' sic a lunt,*
 In wrath she was sae vap'rin,†
 She notic't na an aizle ‡ brunt
 Her braw, new, worset apron
 Out thro' that night.

"Ye little skelpie-limmer's-face !²
 I daur you try sic sportin,
 As seek the foul thief ony place,
 For him to spae § your fortune :
 Nae doubt but ye may get a sight !
 Great cause ye hae to fear it ;
 For mony a ane has gotten a fright,
 An' liv'd an' died deleeret,
 On sic a night.

"Ae hairst afore the Sherra-moor,
 I mind't as weel's yestreen—

* quantity of smoke.

† agitated.

‡ cinder.

§ foretell.

¹ Take a candle and go alone to a looking-glass : eat an apple before it, and some traditions say, you should comb your hair all the time ; the face of your conjugal companion, *to be*, will be seen in the glass, as if peeping over your shoulder.—*R. B.*

² A technical term in female scolding.—*R. B.*

I was a gilpey * then, I'm sure
 I was na past fyfteen :
 The simmer had been cauld an' wat,
 An' stuff was unco green ;
 An' ay a rantin kirn † we gat,
 An' just on Halloween
 It fell that night.

" Our ' stibble-rig ' ‡ was Rab M'Graen,
 A clever, sturdy fallow ;
 His sin § gat Eppie Sim wi' wean,
 That liv'd in Achmacalla :
 He gat hemp-seed, ¹ I mind it weel,
 An' he made unco light o't ;
 But mony a day was by himsel,
 He was sae sairly frightened
 That vera night."

Then up gat fechtin Jamie Fleck,
 An' he swoor by his conscience,
 That he could saw hemp-seed a peck ;
 For it was a' but nonsense :
 The auld guidman raught || down the pock,
 An' out a handfu' gied him ;
 Syne bad him slip frae 'mang the folk,
 Sometime when nae ane see'd him,
 An' try't that night.

* young romp.

† harvest home.

‡ leader of the reapers.

§ son.

|| reached.

¹ Steal out, unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp-seed, harrowing it th anything you can conveniently draw after you. Repeat now and then "Hemp-seed, I saw thee, hemp-seed I saw thee ; and him (or her) that is be my true love, come after me and pou thee." Look over your left boulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp. Some traditions say, "Come after me and shaw ee," that is, show thyself ; in which case, it simply appears. Others omit e harrowing, and say, "Come after me and harrow thee."—*R. B.*

He marches thro' amang the stacks,
 Tho' he was something sturtin ; *
 The graip he for a harrow taks,
 An' haurls † at his curpin : ‡
 And ev'ry now an' then, he says,
 " Hemp-seed I saw thee,
 An' her that is to be my lass
 Come after me, an' draw thee
 As fast this night."

He whistl'd up ' Lord Lennox' March,'
 To keep his courage cheery ;
 Altho' his hair began to arch,
 He was sae fley'd § an' eerie : ||
 Till presently he hears a squeak,
 An' then a grane an' gruntle ;
 He by his shouther gae a keek,
 An' tumbled wi' a wintle ¶
 Out-owre that night.

He roar d a horrid murder-shout,
 In dreadfu' desperation !
 An' young an' auld come rinnin out,
 An' hear the said narration :
 He swoor 'twas hilchin ** Jean M'Craw,
 Or crouchie †† Merran Humphie—
 Till stop ! she trotted thro' them a' ;
 And wha was it but grumphie ‡‡
 Asteer that night ?

Meg fain wad to the barn gaen,
 To winn three wechts o' naething ; ¹

* staggered. † drags. ‡ rear. § timorous. || frightened.
 ¶ somersault. ** halting. †† crook-backed. ‡‡ the pig.

¹ This charm must likewise be performed unperceived and alone. You go to the barn, and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible ; for there is danger that the being about to appear, may shut the doors, and

But for to meet the deil her lane,
 She pat but little faith in :
 She gies the herd a pickle* nits,
 An' twa red cheekit apples,
 To watch, while for the barn she sets,
 In hopes to see Tam Kipples
 That vera night.

She turns the key wi' cannie thraw,
 An' owre the threshold ventures ;
 But first on Sawnie gies a ca',
 Syne bauldly in she enters :
 A ratton rattl'd up the wa',
 An' she cry'd L—d preserve her !
 An' ran thro' midden-hole an' a',
 An' pray'd wi' zeal and fervour,
 Fu' fast that night.

They hoy't† out Will, wi' sair advice ;
 They hecht‡ him some fine braw ane ;
 It chanc'd the stack he faddom't thrice,¹
 Was timmer-propt for thrawin :
 He taks a swirlie§ auld moss-oak
 For some black, grousome carlin ;
 An' loot a winze,|| an' drew a stroke,
 Till skin in blypes¶ cam haurlin
 Aff's nieves that night.

* few.

† inveigled.

‡ promised.

§ crooked.

|| an oath.

¶ shreds.

o you some mischief. Then take that instrument used in winnowing the corn, which in our country dialect we call a "wecht," and go through all the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times, and the third time, an apparition will pass through the barn, in at the windy door, and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance of retinue, marking the employment or station in life.—*R. B.*

¹ Take an opportunity of going unnoticed to a "bear-stack," and fathom three times round. The last fathom of the last time, you will catch in your arms the appearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow.—*R. B.*

A wanton widow Leezie was,
 As cantie as a kittlen ;
 But och ! that night, amang the shaws,*
 She gat a fearful settlin !
 She thro' the whins, an' by the cairn,
 An' owre the hill gaed scrievin ; †
 Whare three lairds' lan's met at a burn,¹
 To dip her left sark sleeve in,
 Was bent that night.

Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
 As thro' the glen it wimpl't ; ‡
 Whyles round a rocky scaur § it strays,
 Whyles in a wiel || it dimpl't ;
 Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,
 Wi' bickerin, dancin dazzle ;
 Whyles cookit ¶ underneath the braes,
 Below the spreading hazle
 Unseen that night.

Amang the brachens,** on the brae,
 Between her an' the moon,
 The deil, or else an outler quey, ††
 Gat up an' ga'e a croon :
 Poor Leezie's heart maist lap the hool ; ‡‡
 Near lav'rock §§-height she jumpet,

* woods.

† careering.

‡ sported.

§ precipitous bank of earth.

|| eddy.

¶ crept.

** ferns.

†† wandered young cow.

‡‡ sheath.

§§ lark.

¹ You go out, one or more (for this is a social spell), to a south running spring, or rivulet, where "three lairds' lands meet," and dip your left shirt sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake, and, some time near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it.—*R. B.*

But mist a fit, an' in the pool
Out-owre the lugs she plumpet,
Wi' a plunge that night.

In order, on the clean hearth-stane,
The 'luggies'¹ three are ranged ;
An' ev'ry time great care is ta'en
To see them duly changed :
Auld uncle John, wha wedlock's joys
Sin' 'Mar's-year'² did desire,
Because he gat the toom dish thrice,
He heaved them on the fire,
In wrath that night,

Wi' merry sangs, an' friendly cracks,
I wat they did na weary ;
And unco tales, an' funnie jokes—
Their sports were cheap an' cheery :
Till butter'd sowens,³ wi' fragrant lunt, *
Set a' their gabs a-steerin ; †
Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt, ‡
They parted aff careerin
Fu' blythe that night.

* steam.

† tongues wagging.

‡ whiskey.

¹ Take three dishes, put clean water in one, foul water in another, and leave the third empty ; blindfold a person, and lead him to the hearth where the dishes are ranged ; he (or she) dips the left hand : if by chance in the clean water, the future (husband or) wife will come to the bar of matrimony a maid ; if in the foul, a widow ; if in the empty dish, it foretells, with equal certainty, no marriage at all. It is repeated three times, and every time the arrangement of the dishes is altered.—*R. B.*

² 1715, when the Earl of Mar headed an insurrection.

³ Sowens, with butter instead of milk to them, is always the Halloween Supper.—*R. B.*

TO A MOUSE,

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE
PLOUGH, NOVEMBER 1785.

WEE, sleeket, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie !
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickerin * brattle ! †
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murderin' pattle ! ‡

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal !

I doubt na, whyles, § but thou may thieve ;
What then ? poor beastie, thou maun live !
A daimen || icker ¶ in a thrave **
'S a sma' request ;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave, ††
An' never miss't !

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin !
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin !
An' naething, now, to big ‡‡ a new ane,
O' foggage green !
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell §§ an' keen !

* speedy. † scamper. ‡ a hand-stick to break clods. § sometimes.
|| occasional. ¶ ear of corn. ** twenty-four sheaves. †† remainder.
‡‡ build. §§ biting.

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
 An' weary winter comin fast,
 An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell—
 Till crash ! the cruel coultter past
 Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
 Has cost thee mony a weary nibble !
 Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
 But * house or hald,†
 To thole ‡ the winter's sleety dribble,
 An' cranreuch § could !

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
 In proving foresight may be vain ;
 The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft agley, ||
 An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
 For promis'd joy !

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me !
 The present only toucheth thee :
 But och ! I backward cast my e'e,
 On prospects drear !
 An' forward, tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear !

[“ It is difficult to decide (writes Currie) whether this ‘ Address ’ should be considered as serious or comic. If we smile at the ‘ bickering brattle ’ of this little flying animal, it is a smile of tenderness and pity. The descriptive part is admirable ; the moral reflections beautiful, arising directly out of the occasion ; and in the conclusion there is a deep melancholy, a sentiment of doubt and dread that rises to the sublime.”]

* without.

† holding.

‡ suffer.

§ crisp hoar-frost.

|| awry.

EPITAPH ON JOHN DOVE, INNKEEPER.

HERE lies Johnie Pigeon ;
 What was his religion
 Whaever desires to ken,
 To some other warl'
 Maun follow the carl,
 For here Johnie Pigeon had nane !

Strong ale was ablution—
 Small beer—persecution,
 A dram was "*memento mori* ;"
 But a full-flowing bowl
 Was the saving his soul,
 And port was celestial glory.

[John Dove, or more familiarly, "Johnie Doo" was mine host of the Whitefoord Arms Inn at Mauchline, in the main street, opposite the church, at the corner of a cross street, named Cowgate. If we mistake not, he was the "Paisley John" of another poem by Burns, which would indicate that he originally hailed from that town. We have Gilbert Burns' authority for believing that the poet never frequented public houses till he had almost formed the resolution to become an author. Certain it is, before the close of the year 1785, Burns was the leading member of a bachelor's club of a very odd character which held stated meetings at the "Whitefoord Arms." It was a kind of secret association, the professed object of which was to search out, report, and discuss the merits and demerits of the many scandals that cropped up from time to time in the village. The poet was made perpetual president ; John Richmond, a clerk with Gavin Hamilton, was appointed "Clerk of Court" ; James Smith, a draper in the village, was named "procurator fiscal," and to William Hunter, shoemaker—"weel skill'd in dead and living leather"—was assigned the office of "messenger-at-arms." Having premised thus much concerning this club of rare fellows, some of its effects on Burns' musings we shall now proceed to give.]

EPITAPH FOR JAMES SMITH.

LAMENT him, Mauchline husbands a',
 He aften did assist ye ;
 For had ye staid hale weeks awa,
 Your wives they ne'er had miss'd ye.

Ye Mauchline bairns, as on ye press
 To school in bands thegither,
 O tread ye lightly on his grass,—
 Perhaps he was your father !

[The poet, in his fine "Epistle to J. S.," describes his friend as of "scrimpet stature," but of manly configuration and character.]

ADAM ARMOUR'S PRAYER.

GUDE pity me, because I'm little !
 For though I am an elf o' mettle,
 An' can, like ony wabster's * shuttle,
 Jink there or here,
 Yet, scarce as lang's a guide kail-whittle,†
 I'm unco ‡ queer.

An' now Thou kens our woefu' case ;
 For Geordie's "jurr" § we're in disgrace,
 Because we "stang'd" ¶ her through the place,
 An' hurt her spleuchan ; ||
 For whilk we daurna show our face
 Within the clachan. ¶

An' now we're dernd ** in dens and hollows,
 And hunted, as was William Wallace,
 Wi' constables—thae blackguard fallows,
 An' sodgers baith ;
 But Gude preserve us frae the gallows,
 That shamefu' death !

* weaver's.

† cabbage-knife.

‡ uncommon

§ a journeyman, or journeywoman.

|| a purse of animal's skin.

¶ village.

** concealed.

¶ "Riding the stang" was a kind of lynch law, executed against obnoxious persons, by carrying them shoulder-high through the village astride a antle-tree.

Auld grim black-bearded Geordie's sel'—
O shake him owre the mouth o' hell!
There let him hing, an' roar, an' yell
 Wi' hideous din,
And if he offers to rebel,
 Then heave him in.

When Death comes in wi' glimmerin blink,
An' tips auld drucken Nanse¹ the wink,
May Sautan gie her doup a clink
 Within his yett,
An' fill her up wi' brimstone drink,
 Red-reekin het.

Though Jock an' hav'rel * Jean² are merry—
Some devil seize them in a hurry,
An' waft them in th' infernal wherry
Straught through the lake,
An' gie their hides a noble curry
Wi' oil of aik ! †

As for the "jurr"—puir worthless body !
She's got mischief enough already ;
Wi' stanget hips, and buttocks bluidy,
 She's suffer'd sair ;
But, may she wintle in a woody, †
 If she wh—e mair !

[This production is one of a group of hasty comic effusions dashed off by Burns at this period in connection with the Whiteford Arms convention already spoken of. The parents of Jean Armour lived at the back of the Inn; but her namesake who is the subject of the present poem was in no way related to her. The "Geordie" of the piece was another Mauchline innkeeper, whose "jurr," or female servant, had committed some error that caused a kind of "hue and cry" against her among the neighbours. Thus encouraged, a band of reckless young fellows, with Adam Armour for a

* silly.

† an oaken stick.

† spin round on the gallows.

¹ Geordie's wife.

² Geordie's son and daughter.

ingleader, "rade the stang" upon the offender. Geordie, who sympathised with his "jurr," resented this lawless outrage, and raised criminal proceedings against the perpetrators. Adam Armour, who was an ill-made little fellow of some determination, had to abscond, and during his wanderings he happened to fall in with Burns, who after commiserating the little outlaw, conceived the "Prayer" here put into his lips.]

THE JOLLY BEGGARS.—A CANTATA.

Recitativo.

WHEN lyart* leaves bestrow the yird,†
 Or wavering like the bauckie-bird,¹
 Bedim cauld Boreas' blast ;
 When hailstanes drive wi' bitter skyte,‡
 And infant frosts begin to bite,
 In hoary crancreuch § drest ;
 Ae night at e'en a merry core
 O' randie,|| gangrel ¶ bodies,
 In Poosie-Nansie's held the splore,**
 To drink their orra duddies :††
 Wi' quaffing and laughing,
 They ranted an' they sang,
 Wi' jumping an' thumping,
 The vera girdle ‡‡ rang.

First, niest the fire, in auld red rags,
 Ane sat, weel brac'd wi' mealy bags,
 And knapsack a' in order ;
 His doxy lay within his arm ;
 Wi' usquebae §§ an' blankets warm
 She blinket on her sodger :
 An' ay he gies the tozie ||| drab
 The tither skelpin ¶¶ kiss,

withered. † ground. ‡ slanting stroke. § crisp-rime. || regardless.
 † vagrant. ** spree. †† superfluous rags. ‡‡ circular plate of iron for baking
 §§ whisky. ||| muddled. ¶¶ noisy.

¹ The old Scotch name for the Bat.—*R. B.*

While she held up her greedy gab,
 Just like an aumous dish :¹
 Ilk smack still did crack still,
 Just like a cadger's* whip ;
 Then staggering an' swaggering,
 He roar'd this ditty up—

Air.

Tune—"Soldier's Joy."

I am a son of Mars who have been in many wars,
 And show my cuts and scars wherever I come ;
 This here was for a wench, and that other in a trench,
 When welcoming the French at the sound of the drum
 Lal de daudle, &c.

My prenticeship I past where my leader breath'd his last
 When the bloody die was cast on the heights of Abram:
 And I servèd out my trade when the gallant game was
 play'd,
 And the Moro³ low was laid at the sound of the drum

I lastly was with Curtis among the floating batt'ries,⁴
 And there I left for witness an arm and a limb ;
 Yet let my country need me, with Elliot⁵ to head me,
 I'd clatter on my stumps at the sound of a drum.

* a travelling hawker, whose wares were carried by a donkey and creels.

¹ The poet has the irreverence to compare her mouth to a beggar's alms dish.

² The battle-ground in front of Quebec, where Wolfe victoriously fell in September 1759.

³ El Moro was the castle that defended the harbour of St Iago.

⁴ At the siege of Gibraltar in 1762.

⁵ G. A. Elliot (Lord Heathfield), who defended Gibraltar during three years.

ad now tho' I must beg, with a wooden arm and leg,
 And many a tatter'd rag hanging over my bum,
 n as happy with my wallet, my bottle and my callet,*
 As when I used in scarlet to follow a drum.

hat tho', with hoary locks, I must stand the winter
 shocks,
 Beneath the woods and rocks, oftentimes for a home,
 hen the tother bag I sell, and the tother bottle tell,
 I could meet a troop of hell, at the sound of a drum.

Recitativo.

He ended ; and the kebars † sheuk,
 Aboon the chorus roar ;
 While frightened rattons ‡ backward leuk,
 An' seek the benmost bore : §
 A fairy fiddler frae the neuk, ||
 He skirl'd out, encore !
 But up arose the martial chuck,
 An' laid the loud uproar.

Air.

Tune—"Sodger Laddie."

I once was a maid, tho' I cannot tell when,
 And still my delight is in proper young men :
 Some one of a troop of dragoons was my daddie,
 No wonder I'm fond of a sodger laddie.
 Sing, lal de dal, &c.

The first of my loves was a swaggering blade,
 To rattle the thundering drum was his trade ;
 His leg was so tight, and his cheek was so ruddy,
 Transported I was with my sodger laddie.

trull † rafters. ‡ rats. § innermost hole ¶ corner.

But the godly old chaplain left him in the lurch ;
 The sword I forsook for the sake of the church :
 He ventur'd the soul, and I risket the body,
 'Twas then I prov'd false to my sodger laddie.

Full soon I grew sick of my sanctified sot,
 The regiment at large for a husband I got ;
 From the gilded spontoon to the fife I was ready,
 I askèd no more but a sodger laddie.

But the peace it reduc'd me to beg in despair,
 Till I met my old boy in a Cunningham fair ;
 His rags regimental, they flutter'd so gaudy,
 My heart it rejoic'd at a sodger laddie.

And now I have liv'd—I know not how long,
 And still I can join in a cup and a song ;
 But whilst with both hands I can hold the glass stead
 Here's to thee, my hero, my sodger laddie.

Recitativo.

[Poor Merry-Andrew, in the neuk,
 Sat guzzling wi' a tinkler-hizzie ; *
 They mind't na wha the chorus teuk,
 Between themselves they were sae busy :
 At length, wi' drink an' courting dizzy,
 He stoiter'd up an' made a face ;
 Then turn'd an' laid a smack † on Grizzie,
 Syne tun'd his pipes wi' grave grimace.

Air.

Tune—"Auld Sir Symon."

Sir Wisdom's a fool when he's fou ;
 Sir Knave is a fool in a session ; ‡

* slut.

† kiss.

‡ when tried criminally.

He's there but a prentice I trow,
But I am a fool by profession.

My grannie she bought me a beuk,
An' I held awa to the school ;
I fear I my talent misteuk,
But what will ye hae of a fool ?

For drink I would venture my neck ;
A hizzie's * the half of my craft ;
But what could ye other expect,
Of ane that's avowedly daft ?

I ance was tyed up like a stirk,†
For civilly swearing and quaffing ;
I ance was abus'd i' the kirk,
For towsing ‡ a lass i' my daffin.§

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport,
Let naebody name wi' a jeer ;
There's even, I'm tauld, i' the Court
A tumbler ca'd the Premier.

Observ'd ye yon reverend lad
Mak faces to tickle the mob ;
He rails at our mountebank squad,—
It's rivalry just i' the job.

And now my conclusion I'll tell,
For faith I'm confoundedly dry ;
The chiel that's a fool for himsel,
Guid L—d ! he's far dafter than I.]

loose woman.

bullock : this means the punishment of the "Jougs," an iron collar
locked round a culprit's neck in a public thoroughfare.

† rumpling.

§ fun.

Recitativo.

Then niest outspak a raucle carlin,*
 Wha kent fu' weel to cleek † the sterlin ;
 For mony a pursie she had hooked,
 An' had in mony a well been douked :
 Her love had been a Highland laddie,
 But weary fa' the waefu' woodie ; ‡
 Wi' sighs an' sobs she thus began
 To wail her braw John Highlandman.

Air.

Tune—"O an ye were dead, Guidman."

A Highland lad my love was born,
 The lalland laws he held in scorn ;
 But he still was faithfu' to his clan,
 My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

Chorus.

Sing hey my braw John Highlandman !
 Sing ho my braw John Highlandman !
 There's not a lad in a' the lan'
 Was match for my John Highlandman.

With his philibeg § an' tartan plaid,
 An' guid claymore || down by his side,
 The ladies' hearts he did trepan,
 My gallant, braw John Highlandman.
 Sing hey, &c.

We rangèd a' from Tweed to Spey,
 An' liv'd like lords an' ladies gay ;
 For a lalland face he fearèd none,—
 My gallant, braw John Highlandman.
 Sing hey, &c.

* a tough old woman.
 § kilt.

† steal with crooked finger.
 || broadsword.

‡ gallows.

They banish'd him beyond the sea.
But ere the bud was on the tree,
Adown my cheeks the pearls ran,
Embracing my John Highlandman.
Sing hey, &c.

But, och ! they catch'd him at the last,
And bound him in a dungeon fast :
My curse upon them every one,
They've hang'd my braw John Highlandman !
Sing hey, &c.

And now a widow I must mourn
The pleasures that will ne'er return ;
No comfort but a hearty can,
When I think on John Highlandman.
Sing hey, &c.

Recitativo.

A pigmy scraper wi' his fiddle,
Wha us'd at trystes an' fairs to driddle,*
Her strappin † limb and gausy ‡ middle
(He reach'd nae higher)
Had hol'd his heartie like a riddle,
An' blawn't on fire.

Wi' hand on hainch, and upward e'e,
He croon'd his gamut, one, two, three,
Then in an arioso key,
The wee Apollo
Set off wi' allegretto glee
His giga solo.

* perform.

† powerful.

‡ buxom.

*Air.**Tune*—"Whistle owre the lave o't."

Let me ryke * up to dight † that tear,
 An' go wi' me an' be my dear ;
 An' then your every care an' fear
 May whistle owre the lave ‡ o't.

Chorus.

I am a fiddler to my trade,
 An' a' the tunes that e'er I played,
 The sweetest still to wife or maid,
 Was whistle owre the lave o't.

At kirns an' weddins we'se be there,
 An' O sae nicely's we will fare !
 We'll bowse about till Daddie Care
 Sing whistle owre the lave o't.

I am, &c.

Sae merrily's the banes we'll pyke,
 An' sun oursells about the dyke ;
 An' at our leisure, when ye like,
 We'll whistle owre the lave o't.

I am, &c.

But bless me wi' your heav'n o' charms,
 An' while I kittle hair on thairms, §
 Hunger, cauld, an' a' sic harms,
 May whistle owre the lave o't.

I am, &c.

Recitativo.

Her charms had struck a sturdy caird,
 As weel as poor gut-scraper ;
 He taks the fiddler by the beard,
 An' draws a roosty rapier—

* reach.

† wipe.

‡ rest.

§ horse-hair of the bow on catgut.

He swoor by a' was swearing worth,
 To speet him like a pliver,*
 Unless he would from that time forth
 Relinquish her for ever.

Wi' ghastly e'e, poor tweedle-dee
 Upon his hunkers bended,
 An' pray'd for grace wi' ruefu' face,
 An' so the quarrel ended.
 But tho' his little heart did grieve
 When round the tinkler prest her,
 He feign'd to snirtle † in his sleeve,
 When thus the caird address'd her :

Air.

Tune.—"Clout the Cauldron."

My bonie lass, I work in brass,
 A tinkler is my station ;
 I've travell'd round all Christian ground
 In this my occupation ;
 I've taen the gold, an' been enrolled
 In many a noble squadron ;
 But vain they search'd when off I march'd
 To go an' clout ‡ the cauldron.
 I've taen the gold, &c.

Despise that shrimp, that wither'd imp,
 With a' his noise an' cap'rin ;
 An' take a share with those that bear
 The budget § and the apron !
 And *by* that stowp ! my faith an' houe,
 And *by* that dear Kilbaigie,¹

plover for roasting. † laugh in derision. ‡ mend. § bag of tools.

A peculiar sort of whisky so called, a great favourite with Poosie nsie's clubs.—R. B. So named from Kilbaigie distillery, in Clack-nnan.

If e'er ye want, or meet wi' scant,
 May I ne'er weet my craigie.
 And by that stowp, &c.

Recitativo.

The caird prevail'd—th' unblushing fair
 In his embraces sank ;
 Partly wi' love o'ercome sae sair,
 An' partly she was drunk :
 Sir Violino, with an air
 That show'd a man o' spunk,
 Wish'd unison between the pair,
 An' made the bottle clunk
 To their health that night.

But hurchin Cupid shot a shaft,
 That play'd a dame a shavie*—
 The fiddler rak'd her, fore and aft,
 Behint the chicken cavie.
 Her lord, a wight of Homer's craft,¹
 Tho' limpin wi' the spavie,
 He hirpl'd up, an' lap like daft,
 An' shor'd † them *Dainty Davie* ‡
 O' boot § that night.

He was a care-defying blade
 As ever Bacchus listed !
 Tho' Fortune sair upon him laid,
 His heart, she ever miss'd it.
 He had no wish but—to be glad,
 Nor want but—when he thirsted ;
 He hated nought but—to be sad,
 An' thus the muse suggested
 His sang that night.

* clean trick. † promised. ‡ the song so called. § into the bargain.

¹ Homer is allowed to be the oldest ballad-singer on record.—*R. B.*

*Air.**Tune*—"For a' that, an' a' that."

I am a Bard of no regard,
 Wi' gentle folks an' a' that ;
 But Homer-like, the glowrin byke,*
 Frae town to town I draw that.

Chorus.

For a' that, an' a' that,
 An' twice as muckle's a' that ;
 I've lost but ane, I've twa behin',
 I've wife eneugh for a' that.

I never drank the Muses' stank,†
 Castalia's burn, an' a' that ;
 But there it streams an' richly reams,
 My Helicon I ca' that.
 For a' that, &c.

Great love I bear to a' the fair,
 Their humble slave an' a' that ;
 But lordly will, I hold it still
 A mortal sin to thraw that.
 For a' that, &c.

In raptures sweet, this hour we meet,
 Wi' mutual love an' a' that ;
 But for how lang the flie may stang,
 Let inclination law that.
 For a' that, &c.

Their tricks an' craft hae put me daft,
 They've taen me in, an' a' that ;

* staring through.

† fountain or pool.

But clear your decks, an' here's the Sex!
I like the jads for a' that.

Chorus.

For a' that, an' a' that,
An' twice as muckle's a' that;
My dearest bluid, to do them guid,
They're welcome till't for a' that.

Recitativo.

So sang the bard—and Nansie's wa's
Shook with a thunder of applause,
Re-echo'd from each mouth!
They toom'd their pocks, they pawn'd their duds,
They scarcely left to coor their fuds,
To quench their lowin drouth:
Then owre again, the jovial thrang
The poet did request
To lowse his pack an' wale * a sang,
A ballad o' the best;
He rising, rejoicing,
Between his twa Deborahs,
Looks round him, an' found them
Impatient for the chorus.

Air.

Tune—"Jolly Mortals, fill your Glasses."

See the smoking bowl before us,
Mark our jovial ragged ring!
Round and round take up the chorus,
And in raptures let us sing—

Chorus.

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

What is title, what is treasure,
What is reputation's care ?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter how or where !
A fig for, &c.

With the ready trick and fable,
Round we wander all the day ;
And at night, in barn or stable,
Hug our doxies on the hay.
A fig for, &c.

Does the train-attended carriage
Thro' the country lighter rove ?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love ?
A fig for, &c.

Life is all a variorum
We regard not how it goes ;
Let them cant about decorum,
Who have character to loose.
A fig for, &c.

Here's to budgets, bags and wallets !
Here's to all the wandering train,
Here's our ragged brats and callets,*
One and all cry out, Amen !

Chorus.

A fig for those by law protected !
Liberty's a glorious feast !
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

[One night after a meeting held at John Dow's, the poet, in the company of James Smith and Richmond, ventured into a very noisy assemblage of

* trulls.

vagrants who were making merry in a "hedge alehouse" kept by a Mrs Gibson, known by the soubriquet of "Poosie" or "Posie Nancy." After witnessing a little of the rough jollity there, the three young men left; and in the course of a few days, Burns recited a part of this wonderful poem to Richmond, who reported that, to the best of his recollection, it contained songs by a *Sweep* and by a *Sailor* which do not now appear in the finished cantata.]

SONG—FOR A' THAT.

THO' women's minds, like winter winds,
 May shift, and turn, an' a' that,
 The noblest breast adores them maist—
 A consequence I draw that.

Chor.—For a' that an' a' that,
 And twice as meikle's a' that;
 The bonie lass that I loe best
 She'll be my ain for a' that.

Great love I bear to a' the fair,
 Their humble slave, an' a' that;
 But lordly will, I hold it still
 A mortal sin to thraw that.
 For a' that, &c.

But there is ane aboon the lave,
 Has wit, and sense, an' a' that;
 A bonie lass, I like her best,
 And wha a crime dare ca' that?
 For a' that, &c.

In rapture sweet this hour we meet,
 Wi' mutual love an' a' that,
 But for how lang the flie may stang,
 Let inclination law that.
 For a' that, &c.

Their tricks an' craft hae put me daft,
 They've taen me in an' a' that ;
 But clear your decks, and—here's ' The sex !'
 I like the jads for a' that.
 For a' that, &c.

[This composition is an altered version of the Bard's first song in the "Jolly Beggars." We shall next proceed to give what seems to have been the poet's first intention as a song for the "sturdy caird" in the same cantata.]

SONG—KISSIN MY KATIE.

Tune—"The bob o' Dumblane."

O MERRY hae I been teethin a heckle,*
 An' merry hae I been shapin a spoon ;
 O merry hae I been cloutin † a kettle,
 An' kissin my Katie when a' was done.
 O a' the lang day I ca' at my hammer,
 An' a' the lang day I whistle and sing ;
 O a' the lang night I cuddle my kimmer, ‡
 An' a' the lang night as happy's a king.

Bitter in dool § I lickit || my winnins ¶
 O' marrying Bess, to gie her a slave :
 Blest be the hour she cool'd in her linnens,
 And blythe be the bird that sings on her grave !
 Come to my arms, my Katie, my Katie ;
 O come to my arms and kiss me again !
 Drucken or sober, here's to thee, Katie !
 An' blest be the day I did it again.

* Soldering fresh teeth to a flax-dresser's comb.

† companion.

§ grief.

|| eat the fruit of.

† mending.

¶ earnings.

THE COTTAR'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

INSCRIBED TO R. AIKEN, ESQ.

“ Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
 Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
 The short and simple annals of the poor.”

GRAZ.

My lov'd, my honor'd, much respected friend !
 No mercenary bard his homage pays ;
 With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
 My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise :
 To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
 The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene :
 The native feelings strong, the guileless ways ;
 What Aiken in a cottage would have been ;
 Ah ! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there I woen

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh ;*
 The short'ning winter-day is near a close ;
 The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh ;
 The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose ;
 The toil-worn Cottar frae his labor goes,—
 This night his weekly moil is at an end,
 Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
 Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
 And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward ben

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree ;
 Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher † through
 To meet their 'dad,' wi' flichterin' ‡ noise and glee.
 His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonilie,

* whistling sound.

† make way.

‡ fluttering.

his clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
 The lispin infant, prattling on his knee,
 Does a' his weary kiaugh * and care beguile,
 and makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

belyve,† the elder bairns come drapping in,
 At service out, amang the farmers roun' ;
 Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie ‡ rin
 A cannie § errand to a neibor town :
 Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
 In youthfu' bloom—love sparkling in her e'e—
 Comes hame ; perhaps, to shew a braw new gown,
 Or deposite her sair-worn penny fee,
 To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
 And each for other's welfare kindly spiers :||
 The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet ;
 Each tells the uncoss ¶ that he sees or hears.
 The parents partial eye their hopeful years ;
 Anticipation forward points the view ;
 The mother, wi' her needle and her sheers,
 Bars ** auld claes †† look amaist as weel's the new ;
 The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's and their mistress's command,
 The youngers a' are warned to obey ;
 And mind their labors wi' an eydent ‡‡ hand,
 And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk §§ or play ;
 "And O ! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
 And mind your duty, duly, morn and night ;
 Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
 Implore His counsel and assisting might :
 They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright."

* anxiety.
 ¶ enquires.

† by-and-by.
 ¶ uncommon news.
 †† diligent.

‡ attentively.
 ** makes.
 §§ dally.

§ private.
 †† clothes.

But hark ! a rap comes gently to the door ;
 Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
 Tells how a neibor lad came o'er the moor,
 To do some errands, and convoy her haine.
 The wily mother sees the conscious flame
 Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek ;
 With heart-struck anxious care, enquires his name,
 While Jenny hafflins * is afraid to speak ;
 Weel-pleased the mother hears, it's nae wild, worthless
 rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben ;
 A strappin' youth, he takes the mother's eye ;
 Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en ;
 The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
 The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
 But blate† an' laithfu',‡ scarce can weel behave ;
 The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
 What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave ;
 Weel-pleas'd to think her bairn's respected like the lave!

O happy love ! where love like this is found :
 O heart-felt raptures ! bliss beyond compare !
 I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
 And sage experience bids me this declare,—
 " If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare—
 One cordial in this melancholy vale,
 'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
 In other's arms, breathe out the tender tale,
 Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening
 gale."¹

* almost.

† bashful.

‡ hesitating.

§ rest.

¹ "If anything on earth deserves the name of rapture or transport, it is the feeling of green eighteen in the company of the mistress of his heart when she repays him with an equal return of affection."—*Common-place Book*, April 1783.

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
 A wretch ! a villain ! lost to love and truth !
 That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
 Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth ?
 Curse on his perjurd arts ! dissembling, smooth !
 Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exil'd ?
 Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
 Points to the parents fondling o'er their child ?
 Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild ?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
 The halesome parritch,* chief of Scotia's food ;
 The sowpe their only hawkie† does afford,
 That, 'yont the hallan‡ snugly chows her cood :
 The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
 To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd§ kebbuck,|| fell ; ¶
 And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid :
 The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
 How 'twas a twomond** auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
 They, round the ingle, form a circle wide ;
 The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
 The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride :
 His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
 His lyart haffets †† wearing thin and bare ;
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
 He wales ‡‡ a portion with judicious care ;
 And "Let us worship God !" he says with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise,
 They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim ;
 Perhaps 'Dundee's' wild-warbling measures rise,

* oatmeal porridge.

§ saved.

** twelvemonth.

† cow.

|| cheese.

†† gray side-locks

‡ porch.

¶ pungent.

‡‡ selects.

Or plaintive 'Martyrs,' worthy of the name ;
Or noble 'Elgin' beets the heaven-ward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :

Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame ;
The tickl'd ears no heart-felt raptures raise ;
Nae unison hae they, with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high ;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny ;
Or, how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire ;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry ;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire ;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;
How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head :
How His first followers and servants sped ;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land :
How he, who lone in Patmos banish'd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounc'd by Heaven's
command.

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays :
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"¹
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,

¹ Pope's "Windsor Forest."—*R. B.*



Marshall Brown

In such society, yet still more dear ;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art ;
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart !
The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole ;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well-pleas'd, the language of the soul ;
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way ;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest :
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide ;
But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad :
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,¹
"An honest man's the noblest work of God ;"
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind ;
What is a lordling's pomp ? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd !

O Scotia ! my dear, my native soil !
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,

¹ "Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made."

GOLDSMITH'S *Deserted Village*.

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
 Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content !
 And O ! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
 From luxury's contagion, weak and vile !
 Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
 A virtuous populace may rise the while,
 And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd isle.

O Thou ! who pour'd the patriotic tide,
 That stream'd thro' Wallace's undaunted heart,
 Who dar'd to, nobly, stem tyrannic pride,
 Or nobly die, the second glorious part :
 (The patriot's God, peculiarly thou art,
 His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward !)
 O never, never Scotia's realm desert ;
 But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard
 In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard !

[This poem was composed near the close of 1785. Lockhart has well said—“ ‘The Cottar's Saturday Night’ is perhaps, of all Burns' pieces, the one whose exclusion from the collection, were such things possible now-a-days, would be most injurious, if not to the genius, at least to the character of the man.”

The original MS., used by the printer of the Kilmarnock edition of his poems, is now at Irvine, carefully preserved by the Burns' Club there, along with several other manuscripts.]

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.

“O Prince ! O chief of many thronèd pow'rs
 That led th' embattl'd seraphim to war—”

MILTON.

O THOU ! whatever title suit thee—
 Auld “Hornie,” “Satan,” “Nick,” or “Clootie,”
 Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,
 Clos'd under hatches,
 Spairges * about the brunstane cootie, †
 To scaud poor wretches !

* scatters.

† foot-pail.

Hear me, auld "Hangie," for a wee,
 An' let poor damnèd bodies be ;
 I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
 Ev'n to a deil,
 To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
 An' hear us squeel :

Great is thy pow'r an' great thy fame ;
 Far kenn'd an' noted is thy name ;
 An' tho' yon lowin heuch's * thy hame,
 Thou travels far ;
 An' faith ! thou's neither lag † nor lame,
 Nor blate, ‡ nor scaur. §

Whyles, rangin like a roarin lion,
 For prey, a' holes an' corners tryin ;
 Whyles, on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin,
 Tirlin || the kirks ;
 Whyles, in the human bosom pryin,
 Unseen thou lurks.

I've heard my rev'rend grannie say,
 In lanely glens ye like to stray ;
 Or where auld ruin'd castles grey
 Nod to the moon,
 Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way,
 Wi' eldritch ¶ croon.

When twilight did my grannie summon,
 To say her pray'rs, douse, honest woman !
 Aft 'yont the dyke she's heard you bummin,
 Wi' eerie ** drone ;
 Or, rustlin, thro' the boortrees †† comin,
 Wi' heavy groan.

* pit or hollow.
 || unroofing.

† slow.
 ¶ hideous.

‡ bashful.
 ** frightful.

§ to be scared.
 †† elder-trees.

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,
 The stars shot down wi' sklentín * light,
 Wi' you mysel, I gat a fright,
 Ayont the lough ;
 Ye, like a rash-buss, stood in sight,
 Wi' wavin sough.†

The cudgel in my neive ‡ did shake,
 Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,
 When wi' an eldritch, stoor § “quaick, quaick,”
 Amang the springs,
 Awa ye squatter'd like a drake,
 On whistlin wings.

Let warlocks grim, an' wither'd hags,
 Tell how wi' you, on ragweed nags,
 They skim the muirs an' dizzy crags,
 Wi' wicked speed ;
 And in kirk-yards renew their leagues,
 Owre howket || dead.

Thence, countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
 May plunge an' plunge the kirm in vain ;
 For oh ! the yellow treasure's ta'en
 By witchin skill ;
 An' dawtet, ¶ twal-pint 'hawkie's' ** gane
 As yell's the bill.††

Thence, mystic knots mak great abuse
 On young guidmen, fond, keen an' croose ;
 When the best wark-lume i' the house,
 By cantraip ‡‡ wit,
 Is instant made no worth a louse,
 Just at the bit.

* slanting.

† sound.

‡ fist.

§ base-voiced.

|| dug-up.

¶ petted.

** cow.

†† milkless as the bull.

‡‡ magic

When thowes dissolve the snawy hoord,
An' float the jinglin icy boord,
Then, water-kelpies haunt the foord,
By your direction,
And 'nighted trav'lers are allur'd
To their destruction.

And aft your moss-traversin "Spunkies"
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is :
The bleezin, curst, mischievous monkees
Delude his eyes,
Till in some miry slough he sunk is,
Ne'er mair to rise.

When masons' mystic word an' grip
In storms an' tempests raise you up,
Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,
Or, strange to tell !
The youngest "brither" ye wad whip
Aff straught to hell.

Lang syne in Eden's bonie yard,
When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,
An' all the soul of love they shar'd,
The raptur'd hour—
Sweet on the fragrant flow'ry swaird,
In shady bow'r;

Then you, ye auld, snick-drawing * dog !
Ye cam to Paradise incog,
An' play'd on man a cursed brogue,†
 (Black be your fa' !)
An' gied the infant warld a shog,‡
 'Maist ruin'd a'.

* who draws the bolt stealthily.

† trick.

† startling shake.

D'ye mind that day when in a bizz *
 Wi' reeket duds,† an' reestet gizz,‡
 Ye did present your smootie phiz §
 'Mang better folk,
 An' sklented || on the man of Uzz
 Your spitefu' joke?

An' how ye gat him i' your thrall,
 An' brak him out o' house an' hal',
 While scabs an' botches did him gall,
 Wi' bitter claw ;
 An' lows'd his ill-tongu'd wicked scaull—¶
 Was warst ava?

But a' your doings to rehearse,
 Your wily snares an' fechtin fierce,
 Sin' that day Michael¹ did you pierce,
 Down to this time,
 Wad ding a Lallan tongue, or Erse,
 In prose or rhyme.

An' now, auld "Cloots," I ken ye're thinkin,
 A certain bardie's rantin, drinkin,
 Some luckless hour will send him linkin,
 To your black pit ;
 But, faith ! he'll turn a corner jinkin,
 An' cheat you yet.

But fare-you-weel, auld "Nickie-ben !"
 O wad ye tak a thought an' men' !
 Ye aiblins ** might—I dinna ken—
 Still hae a stake :
 I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
 Ev'n for your sake !

* ferment.

† smoked rags.

‡ fire-shrivelled appearance.

§ blackened face.

|| sinisterly cast.

¶ scolding wife.

** perhaps.

¹ *Vide* Milton, Book vi.—*R. B.*

[The only variation we have to record in connection with this poem in the seventh verse from the close, and it is a very significant one. In a letter to John Richmond, of 17th Feb. 1786, the poet hints at something disagreeable having happened with respect to himself. The reference is to an occurrence which, shortly afterwards, led to a rupture between Allan Armour and him. As the present poem then stood, the verse indicated read as follows :—

“Lang syne, in Eden’s happy scene
 When strappin Adam’s days were green,
 And Eve was like my bonie Jean—
 My dearest part,
 A dancin, sweet, young handsome quean,
 O’ guileless heart.”

For that stanza, the one in the text was substituted when he came to prepare the poem for the press.

The poet styles Satan a “snick-drawin dog,” an epithet which refers to the practised cheat who ingeniously scrapes away from the horns of cattle the natural markings which tell their age,—by which trick he can pass them off as much younger, and of more value.]

SCOTCH DRINK.

Gie him strong drink until he wink,
 That’s sinking in despair ;
 An’ liquor guid to fire his bluid,
 That’s prest wi’ grief and care :
 There let him bowse, an’ deep carouse,
 Wi’ bumpers flowing o’er,
 Till he forgets his loves or debts,
 An’ minds his griefs no more.

SOLOMON’S PROVERBS, xxxi. 6, 7.

LET other poets raise a frâcas
 ’Bout vines, and wines, an’ drucken Bacchus,
 An’ crabbet names an’ stories wrack us,
 An’ grate our lug : *
 I sing the juice Scotch bere † can mak us,
 In glass or jug.

* ear.

† barley.

O thou, my muse ! guid auld Scotch drink !
 Whether thro' wimplin * worms thou jink, †
 Or, richly brown, ream owre the brink,
 In glorious faem,
 Inspire me, till I lisp an' wink,
 To sing thy name !

Let husky wheat the haughs ‡ adorn,
 An' aits set up their awnie § horn,
 An' pease and beans, at e'en or morn,
 Perfume the plain :
 Leeze || me on thee, John Barleycorn,
 Thou king o' grain !

On thee aft Scotland chows her cood,
 In souple scones, ¶ the wale ** o' food !
 Or tumblin in the boiling flood
 Wi' kail an' beef ;
 But when thou pours thy strong heart's blood,
 There thou shines chief.

Food fills the wame, †† an' keeps us leevin ;
 Tho' life's a gift no worth receivin,
 When heavy-dragg'd wi' pine an' grievin ;
 But oil'd by thee,
 The wheels o' life gae down-hill, screevin, ‡‡
 Wi' rattlin glee.

Thou clears the head o' doited §§ Lear ;
 Thou cheers the heart o' drooping Care ;
 Thou strings the nerves o' Labor sair,
 At 's weary toil ;
 Thou ev'n brightens dark Despair
 Wi' gloomy smile.

* winding. † escape.

|| commend me to thee!

†† stomach.

‡ level land near a river.

¶ soft cakes.

‡‡ rapidly

§ bearded.

** most sele

§§ confused

Aft, clad in massy siller weed,*
 Wi' gentles thou erects thy head ;
 Yet, humbly kind in time o' need.
 The poor man's wine ;
 His wee drap parritch, or his bread ;
 Thou kitchens † fine.

Thou art the life o' public haunts ;
 But ‡ thee, what were our fairs and rants ?
 Ev'n godly meetings o' the saunts,
 By thee inspir'd,
 When, gaping, they besiege the tents,
 Are doubly fir'd.¹

That merry night we get the corn in,
 O sweetly, then, thou reams the horn in !
 Or reekin on a New-year mornin
 In cog or bicker,§
 An' just a wee drap sp'ritual burn in,||
 An' gusty sucker ! ¶

When Vulcan gies his bellows breath,
 An' ploughmen gather wi' their graith, **
 O rare ! to see thee fizz an' freath
 I' th' lugget caup ! ††
 Then Burnewin ‡‡ comes on like death
 At every chaup.§§

Nae mercy, then, for airn or steel ;
 The brawnie, bainie, ploughman chiel,
 Brings hard owrehip, wi' sturdy wheel,
 The strong forehammer,

strong ale in silver mugs. † gives a relish to. ‡ without.
 wooden vessel. || ale-posset with whisky added. ¶ sugar.
 implements. †† an eared cup, called a "quaich." ‡‡ the blacksmith.
 §§ stroke of the hammer.

¹ See "The Holy Fair."

Till block an' studdie ring an' reel,
Wi' dinsome clamour.

When skirlin weanies * see the light,
Thou maks the gossips clatter bright,
How fumblin cuifs † their dearies slight ;
Wae worth the name !
Nae howdie ‡ gets a social night,
Or plack § frae them.

When neibors anger at a plea,
An' just as wud || as wud can be,
How easy can the barley brie
Cement the quarrel !
It's aye the cheapest lawyer's fec,
To taste the barrel.

Alake ! that e'er my muse has reason,
To wyte ¶ her countrymen wi' treason !
But mony daily weet their weason **
Wi' liquors nice,
An' hardly, in a winter season,
E'er spier †† her price.

Wae worth that brandy, burnin trash !
Fell source o' mony a pain an' brash !
Twins ‡‡ mony a poor, doylt, §§ drucken hash,
O' half his days ;
An' sends, beside, auld Scotland's cash
To her warst faes.

Ye Scots, wha wish auld Scotland well !
Ye chief, to you my tale I tell,

* squalling infants.

|| wild.

†† ask.

† incapables.

¶ blame.

‡‡ deprives.

‡ midwife.

** wet their throat.

§§ demented.

§ the smallest coi

Poor, plackless * devils like mysel !

It sets you ill,

Wi' bitter, dearthfu' wines to mell, †

Or foreign gill.

May gravels round his blather wrench,

An' gouts torment him, inch by inch,

Wha twists his gruntle ‡ wi' a glunch §

O' sour disdain,

Out owre a glass o' whisky-punch

Wi' honest men !

O whisky ! soul o' plays an' pranks !

Accept a bardie's gratefu' thanks !

When wanting thee, what tuneless cranks

Are my poor verses !

Thou comes—they rattle i' their ranks,

At ither's a—s !

Thee, Ferintosh !¹ O sadly lost !

Scotland lament frae coast to coast !

Now colic grips, an' barkin hoast ||

May kill us a' ;

For loyal Forbes' charter'd boast

Is ta'en awa !

Thae curst horse-leeches o' th' Excise,

Wha mak the whisky stells their prize !

Haud up thy han', Deil ! ance, twice, thrice !

There, seize the blinkers !

An' bake them up in brunstane pies

For poor d—n'd drinkers.

* pennyles.

§ grumble.

† meddle.

|| cough.

‡ mouth.

¹ Whisky from a privileged distillery in Cromartyshire, belonging to Forbes of Culloden. The privilege was abolished by Parliament in 1705.

Fortune ! if thou'll but gie me still
 Hale breeks, a scone,* an' whisky giii,
 An' rowth † o' rhyme to rave at will,
 Tak a' the rest,
 An' deal't about as thy blind skill
 Directs thee best.

[Gilbert Burns thus remarks on the subject of this poem :—"Notwithstanding the praise he has bestowed on 'Scotch Drink'—which seems to have misled his historians—I do not recollect during these seven years [the Tarbolton period] nor till towards the end of his commencing author—when his growing celebrity occasioned his being often in company—to have ever seen him intoxicated, nor was he at all given to drinking."]

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS AULD MARE, MAGGIE,

On giving her the accustomed ripp of corn to hansel in the New-Year.

A GUID New-year I wish thee, Maggie !
 Hae, there's a ripp ‡ to thy auld baggie : §
 Tho' thou's howe-backit|| now, an' knaggie, ¶
 I've seen the day
 Thou could hae gaen like ony staggie,**
 Out-owre the lay.††

Tho' now thou's dowie,‡‡ stiff an' crazy,
 An' thy auld hide as white's a daisie,
 I've seen thee dappl't, sleek an' glaizie,
 A bonie gray :
 He should been tight that daur't to raize||| thee,
 Ance in a day.

* flour or barley cake.
 || hollow-backed.
 ‡‡ decayed.

† abundance.
 ¶ bony.
 §§ anger.

‡ handful.
 ** colt.

§ stomach.
 †† lea.

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,
A filly buirdly,* steeve† an' swank;‡
An' set weel down a shapely shank,
As e'er tread yird;§
An' could hae flown out-owre a stank,||
Like ony bird.

It's now some nine-an'-twenty year,
Sin' thou was my guid-father's meere ;
He gied me thee, o' tocher ¶ clear,
An' fifty mark ;
Tho' it was sma', 'twas weel-won gear,
An' thou was stark. **

When first I gaed to woo my Jenny,
Ye then was trottin wi' your minnie :
Tho' ye was trickie, slee, an' funnie,
Ye ne'er was donsie ;††
But hamely, tawie, †† quiet, an' cannie,
An' unco sonsie. §§

That day, ye pranc'd wi' muckle pride,
When ye bure hame my bonie bride :
An' sweet an' gracefu' she did ride,
Wi' maiden air !
Kyle-Stewart I could bragget wide,
For sic a pair.

Tho' now ye dow ||| but hoyte ¶¶ and hobble,
An' wintle *** like a saumont-coble,
That day, ye was a jinker +++ noble,
For heels an' win' !

troug.	† firm.	† stately.	§ earth.	ditch or morass.
lowry.	** strong.	†† mischievous.	‡‡ easy-led.	§§ plump.
can.	¶¶ stumble.	*** twist and rock.	††† runner.	

An' ran them till they a' did wauble,*
Far, far, behin' !

When thou an' I were young an' skeigh,†
An' stable-meals at fairs were driegh,‡
How thou wad prance, an' snore, an' skreigh,
An' tak the road !
Town's-bodies ran, an' stood abiegh, §
An' ca't thee mad.

When thou was corn't, an' I was mellow,
We took the road ay like a swallow :
At brooses || thou had ne'er a fellow,
For pith an' speed ;
But ev'ry tail thou pay't them hollow,
Where'er thou gaed.

The sma', droop-rumpl't, hunter cattle
Might aiblins waur't ¶ thee for a brattle ;**
But sax Scotch mile, thou try't their mettle,
An' gar't them whaizle :
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle
O' saugh or hazle.

Thou was a noble 'fittie-lan', ††
As e'er in tug or tow was drawn !
Aft thee an' I, in aught hours' gaun,
On guid March-weather,
Hae turn'd sax rood beside our han',
For days thegither.

Thou never braing't, ‡‡ an fetch't, an' flisket ; §§
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whisket,

* stoiter.

† high-mettled.

‡ lingering.

§ out of the way.

|| wedding-races. ¶ perhaps beat.

** short-race.

†† the near horse of the hindmost pair in ploughing.

‡‡ fretted.

§§ raged and kicked.

But though he was o' high degree,
 The fient a pride, nae pride had he ;
 But wad hae spent an hour caressin,
 Ev'n wi' a tinkler-gipse's messan : *
 At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,
 Nae tawted tyke, † tho' e'er sae duddie,
 But he wad stand, as glad to see him,
 An' stroan'd on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

The tither was a ploughman's collie —
 A rhyming, ranting, raving billie, ‡
 Wha for his friend an' comrade had him,
 And in his freaks had "Luath" ca'd him,
 After some dog in Highland sang, ¹
 Was made lang syne—Lord knows how lang.

He was a gash § an' faithfu' tyke,
 As ever lap a sheugh || or dyke.
 His honest, sonsie, baws'nt ¶ face
 Ay gat him friends in ilka place ;
 His breast was white, his tousie ** back
 Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black ;
 His gawsie †† tail, wi' upward curl,
 Hung owre his hurdies ‡‡ wi' a swirl.

Nae doubt but they were fain §§ o' ither,
 And unco pack an' thick |||| thegither ;
 Wi' social nose whyles snuff'd an' snowket ;
 Whyles mice an' moudieworts ¶¶ they howket ; ***
 Whyles scour'd ††† awa' in lang excursion,
 An' worry'd ither in diversion ;
 Till tir'd at last wi' mony a farce,
 They set them down upon their arse,

nongrel cur. † rough cur. ‡ brother. § sagacious. || ditch.
 striped with white. ** shaggy. †† large. ‡‡ hips. §§ fond.
 hob-a-nob. ¶¶ moles. *** dug up. ††† scampered.

¹ Cuchullin's dog in Ossian's "Fingal."—R. B.

An' there began a lang digression
About the "lords o' the creation."

CÆSAR.

I've aften wonder'd, honest Luath,
What sort o' life poor dogs like you have ;
An' when the gentry's life I saw,
What way poor bodies liv'd ava.

Our laird gets in his rackèd rents,
His coals, his kane,* an' a' his stents : †
He rises when he likes himsel ;
His flunkies answer at the bell ;
He ca's his coach ; he ca's his horse ;
He draws a bonie silken purse,
As lang's my tail, where, thro' the stecks,
The yellow letter'd Geordie keeks.

Frae morn to e'en it's nought but toiling,
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling ;
An' tho' the gentry first are stechin, ‡
Yet ev'n the ha' folk § fill their pechan ||
Wi' sauce, ragouts, an' sic like trashtrie,
That's little short o' downright wastrie.
Our whipper-in, wee, blasted wonner, ¶
Poor, worthless elf, it eats a dinner,
Better than ony tenant-man
His Honour has in a' the lan' :
An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch ** in,
I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH.

Trowth, Cæsar, whyles they're fash't †† eneugh :
A cotter howkin in a sheugh, ‡‡

* rents in farm produce. † assessments. ‡ cramming. § kitchen-people. || belly. ¶ despised indweller. ** stomach. †† perplexed. ‡‡ ditch.

Wi' dirty stanes biggin a dyke,
 Baring* a quarry, an' sic like ;
 Himsel, a wife, he thus sustains,
 A smytrie† o' wee duddie weans,
 An' nought but his han'-daurg,‡ to keep
 Them right an' tight in thack an' raep.§

An' when they meet wi' sair disasters,
 Like loss o' health or want o' masters,
 Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,
 An' they maun starve o' cauld an' hunger :
 But how it comes, I never kent yet,
 They're maistly wonderfu' contented ;
 An' buirdly || chiels, an' clever hizzies, ¶
 Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CÆSAR.

But then to see how ye're neglectet,
 How huff'd, an' cuff'd, an' disrespecket !
 L—d man, our gentry care as little
 For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle ;
 They gang as saucy by poor folk,
 As I wad by a stinking brock.**

I've notic'd, on our laird's court-day,—
 An' mony a time my heart's been wae,—
 Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
 How they maun thole†† a factor's snash ; ‡‡
 He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear
 He'll apprehend them, poind §§ their gear ;
 While they maun stan', wi' aspect humble,
 An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble !

I see how folk live that hae riches ;
 But surely poor-folk maun be wretches !

clearing away the debris from the rock.

† litter.

‡ hand's labour.

"thack and raep," meaning thatch and straw-rope to bind it, is a sym-
 ic term for "household." || stately. ¶ women. ** badger.

endure. †† outburst of spite.

§§ judicially attach.

LUATH.

They're no sae wretched 's ane wad think.
 Tho' constantly on poortith's brink,
 They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,
 The view o't gies them little fright.

Then chance and fortune are sae guided,
 They're ay in less or mair provided ;
 An' tho' fatigu'd wi' close employment,
 A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.

The dearest comfort o' their lives,
 Their grushie* weans an' faithfu' wives ;
 The prattling things are just their pride,
 That sweetens a' their fire-side.

An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy †
 Can mak the bodies unco happy :
 They lay aside their private cares,
 To mind the Kirk and State affairs ;
 They'll talk o' patronage an' priests,
 Wi' kindling fury i' their breasts,
 Or tell what new taxation's comin,
 An' ferlie ‡ at the folk in Lon'on.

As bleak-fac'd Hallowmass returns,
 They get the jovial, rantin kirns, §
 When rural life, of ev'ry station,
 Unite in common recreation ;
 Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
 Forgets there's Care upo' the earth.

That merry day the year begins,
 They bar the door on frosty win's ;
 The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,
 An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam ;
 The luntin pipe, an' sneeshin mill, ||
 Are handed round wi' right guid will ;

* thriving. † ale. ‡ marvel. § harvest-home rejoicings. || snuff-mill

The cantie auld folks crackin crouse,*
The young anes ranting thro' the house—
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barked wi' them.

Still it's owre true that ye hae said,
Sic game is now owre aften play'd ;
There's mony a creditable stock
O' decent, honest, fawsont † folk,
Are riven out baith root an' branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster
In favor wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins thrang a parliamentin',
For Britain's guid his saul indentin'—

CÆSAR.

Haith, lad, ye little ken about it :
For Britain's guid ! guid faith ! I doubt it.
Say rather, gaun as Premiers lead him :
An' saying aye or no 's they bid him :
At operas an' plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading :
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,
To Hague or Calais takes a waft,
To mak a tour an' tak a whirl,
To learn *bon ton*, an' see the worl'.

There, at Vienna, or Versailles,
He rives his father's auld entails ;
Or by Madrid he takes the rout,
To thrum guitars an' fecht wi' nowt ;
Or down Italian vista startles,
Wh-re-hunting amang groves o' myrtles :
Then bowses drumlie German-water,
To mak himsel look fair an' fatter,

* conversing gleefully.

† seemly.

An' clear the consequential sorrows,
Love-gifts of Carnival signoras.

For Britain's guid ! for her destruction !
Wi' dissipation, feud an' faction.

LUATH.

Hech man ! dear sirs ! is that the gate
They waste sae mony a braw estate !
Are we sae foughthen an' harass'd
For gear to gang that gate at last ?

O would they stay aback frae courts,
An' please themsels wi countra sports,
It wad for ev'ry ane be better,
The laird, the tenant, an' the cottar !
For thae frank, rantin', ramblin' billies,
Feint haet o' them's ill-hearted fellows ;
Except for breakin o' their timmer,
Or speakin lightly o' their limmer,
Or shootin of a hare or moor-cock,
The ne'er-a-bit they're ill to poor folk.

But will ye tell me, master Cæsar,
Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure ?
Nae cauld nor hunger e'er can steer them,
The very thought o't need na fear them.

CÆSAR.

L—d, man, were ye but whyles whare I am,
The gentles, ye wad ne'er envy them !

It's true, they need na starve or sweat,
Thro' winter's cauld, or simmer's heat ;
They've nae sair-wark to craze their banes,
An' fill auld age wi' grips an' granes :
But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges an' schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak enow themsels to vex them ;

An' aye the less they hae to sturt * them,
In like proportion, less will hurt them.

A country fellow at the pleugh,
His acre's till'd, he's right eneugh ;
A country girl at her wheel,
Her dizzen's dune, she's unco weel ;
But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
Wi' ev'n-down want o' wark are curst.
They loiter, lounging, lank an' lazy ;
Tho' deil-haet ails them, yet uneasy :
Their days insipid, dull an' tasteless ;
Their nights unquiet, lang an' restless.

An' ev'n their sports, their balls an' races,
Their galloping through public places,
There's sic parade, sic pomp an' art,
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.

The men cast out in party-matches,
Then sowther a' in deep debauches.
Ae night they're mad wi' drink an wh-ring,
Niest day their life is past enduring.

The ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
As great an' gracious a' as sisters ;
But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
They're a' run deils an jads thegither.
Whyles, owre the wee bit cup an plaitie,
They sip the scandal-potion pretty ;
Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbet leuks
Pore owre the devil's pictur'd beuks ;
Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
An' cheat like ony unhanged blackguard.

There's some exceptions, man an' woman ;
But this is gentry's life in common.

By this, the sun was out of sight,
An' darker gloamin brought the night ;

* molest.

The bum-clock * humm'd wi' lazy drone ;
 The kye stood rowtin i' the loan ;
 When up they gat an' shook their lugs,
 Rejoic'd they were na *men* but *dogs* ;
 An' each took aff his several way,
 Resolv'd to meet some ither day.

["The tale of 'Twa Dogs' was composed after the resolution of publishing was nearly taken. Robert had had a dog which he called 'Luath' that was a great favourite. The dog had been killed by the wanton cruelty of some person the night before my father's death. Robert said to me that he should like to confer such immortality as he could bestow upon his old friend Luath, and that he had a great mind to introduce something into the book under the title of 'Stanzas to the memory of a quadruped friend ;' but this plan was given up for the tale as it now stands. 'Cæsar' was merely the creature of the poet's imagination, created for the purpose of holding chat with his favourite *Luath*."]—*Letter of Gilbert Burns.*]

THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST CRY AND PRAYER TO THE SCOTCH REPRESENTATIVES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.¹

Dearest of distillation ! last and best—
 —How art thou lost !—

PARODY ON MILTON.

YE Irish lords, ye knights an' squires,
 Wha represent our brughs an' shires,
 An' doucely † manage our affairs
 In parliament,
 To you a simple poet's pray'rs
 Are humbly sent.

* beetle.

† honestly.

¹ This was written before the Act anent the Scotch distilleries, of session 1786, for which Scotland and the Author return their most grateful thanks.
 —R. B.

Alas ! my roupet * muse is hearse !
Your Honors' hearts wi' grief 'twad pierce,
To see her sittin on her arse

Low i' the dust,
And screechin out prosaic verse.
An' like to burst !

Tell them wha hae the chief direction,
Scotland an' me's in great affliction,
E'er sin' they laid that curst restriction
On aqua-vitæ ;
An' rouse them up to strong conviction,
An' move their pity.

Stand forth, an' tell yon Premier youth †
The honest, open, naked truth :
Tell him o' mine an' Scotland's drouth,
His servants humble :
The muckle deevil blaw you south,
If ye dissemble !

Does any great man glunch † an' gloom?
Speak out, an' never fash § your thumb!
Let posts an' pensions sink or soom
 Wi' them wha grant them;
If honestly they canna come,
 Far better want them.

In gath'rin votes you were na slack ;
Now stand as tightly by your tack :
Ne'er claw lug,|| an' fidge ¶ your back,
An' hum an' haw ;
But raise your arm, an' tell your crack **
Before them a'.

- * hoarse with crying.
- || scratch your ear.

† Mr Pitt.
¶ shrug.

‡ grumble.
** speech.

§ trouble.

Some o' you nicely ken the laws,
 To round the period an' pause,
 An' with rhetòric clause on clause
 To mak harangues ;
 Then echo thro' Saint Stephen's wa's
 Auld Scotland's wrangs.

Dempster ¹ a true blue Scot I'se warran ;
 Thee, aith-detesting, chaste Kilkerran ; ²
 An' that glib-gabbet * Highland baron,
 The Laird o' Graham ; ³
 An' ane, a chap that's d—mn'd auldfarran,†
 Dundas his name : ⁴

Erskine, a spunkie Norland billie ; ⁵
 True Campbells, Frederick and Ilay ; ⁶
 An' Livistone, the bauld Sir Willie ; ⁷
 An' mony ithers,
 Whom auld Demosthenes or Tully
 Might own for brithers.

See, sodger Hugh, ⁸ my watchman stented,
 If poets e'er are represented ;
 I ken if that your sword were wanted,
 Ye'd lend a hand ;
 But when there's ought to say anent it,
 Ye're at a stand.

* ready-tongued.

† sagacious.

George Dempster of Dunnichen, M.P. ² Sir Adam Ferguson, M.P.

¹ Marquis of Graham, afterwards Duke of Montrose.

³ Right Hon. Henry Dundas, M.P. ⁵ Thomas, afterwards Lord Erskine.

⁴ Lord Frederick Campbell, M.P., brother of the Duke of Argyle, and
⁶ y Campbell, Lord Advocate, afterwards Lord President.

Sir Wm. Augustus Cunningham, Baronet, of Livingstone, for some time
 as M.P. for the county of Linlithgow, where he had his estate, which
 was afterwards compelled to sell in consequence of incurring election-
 ing debts.

⁷ Col. Hugh Montgomerie, afterwards Earl of Eglintoun.

Arouse, my boys ! exert your mettle,
 To get auld Scotland back her kettle ;
 Or faith ! I'll wad * my new pleugh-pettle,
 Ye'll see't or † lang,
 She'll teach you, wi' a reekin whittle, ‡
 Anither sang.

This while she's been in crankous mood,
 Her lost Militia ¹ fir'd her bluid ;
 (Deil nor they never mair do guid,
 Play'd her that pliskie !) §
 An' now she's like to rin red wud ||
 About her whisky.

An' L—d ! if ance they pit her till't,
 Her tartan petticoat she'll kilt,
 An' durk an' pistol at her belt,
 She'll tak the streets,
 An' rin her whittle to the hilt,
 I' the first she meets !

For G—d-sake, sirs ! then speak her fair,
 An' straik her cannie wi' the hair,
 An' to the muckle house repair,
 Wi' instant speed,
 An' strive, wi' a' your wit an' lear,
 To get remead.

Yon ill-tongu'd tinkler, Charlie Fox
 May taunt you wi' his jeers and mocks ;
 But gie him 't het, my hearty cocks !
 E'en cove the cadie ! ¶

* pledgc.

† ere.

‡ knife.

§ trick.

|| horn-mad.

¶ message-runner.

¹ The Scots Militia Bill was burdened with conditions which liberal Members would not accept, and it was opposed and lost.

An' send him to his dicing box
An' sportin lady.

Tell yon guid bluid o' auld Boconnock's,¹
I'll be his debt twa mashlum bonnocks,²
An' drink his health in auld Nanse Tinnock's³
Nine times a-week,
If he some scheme, like tea an' winnocks,⁴
Wad kindly seek.

Could he some commutation broach,
I'll pledge my aith in guid braid Scotch,
He needna fear their foul reproach
Nor erudition,
Yon mixtie-maxtie, queer hotch-potch,
The "Coalition."

Auld Scotland has a raucle * tongue ;
She's just a devil wi' a rung ; †
An' if she promise auld or young
To tak their part,
Tho' by the neck she should be strung,
She'll no desert.

And now, ye chosen Five-and-Forty,
May still your mither's heart support ye ;
Then, tho' a minister grow dorty, ‡
An' kick your place,
Ye'll snap your fingers, poor an' hearty,
Before his face.

rough and reckless.

† bludgeon.

‡ petted, saucy.

Pitt was a grandson of Robert Pitt of Boconnock in Cornwall.
Bannocks or scones made of a mash of various kinds of grain.
A worthy old hostess of the Author's in Mauchline, where he sometimes
lies politics over a glass of gude auld "Scotch Drink."—*R. B.*
Some duty was taken off tea, and the loss made up by a window-tax.

I.

M

God bless your Honors, a' your days,
 Wi' sowps o' kail and brats o' claise,
 In spite o' a' the thievish kaes, *
 That haunt St Jamie's !
 Your humble poet sings an' prays,
 While Rab his name is.

POSTSCRIPT.

LET half-starv'd slaves in warmer skies
 See future wines, rich-clust'ring, rise ;
 Their lot auld Scotland ne'er envies,
 But, blythe and frisky,
 She eyes her freeborn, martial boys
 Tak aff their whisky.

What tho' their Phœbus kinder warms,
 While fragrance blooms and beauty charms,
 When wretches range, in famish'd swarms,
 The scented groves ;
 Or, hounded forth, dishonor arms
 In hungry droves !

Their gun's a burden on their shoulder ;
 They downa bide the stink o' powther ;
 Their bauldest thought's a hank'ring swither †
 To stand or rin,
 Till skelp—a shot—they're aff, a' throw'ther,
 To save their skin.

But bring a Scotchman frae his hill,
 Clap in his cheek a Highland gill,
 Say, such is royal George's will,
 An' there's the foe !
 He has nae thought but how to kill
 Twa at a blow.

* jackdaws.

† misgiving.

Nae cauld, faint-hearted doubtings tease him ;
 Death comes, wi' fearless eye he sees him ;
 Wi' bluidy hand a welcome gies him ;
 An' when he fa's,
 His latest draught o' breathin lea'es him
 In faint huzzas.

Sages their solemn een may steek,*
 An' raise a philosophic reek,†
 An' physically causes seek,
 In clime an' season .
 But tell me whisky's name in Greek,
 I'll tell the reason.

Scotland, my auld, respected mither !
 Tho' whiles ye moistify your leather,
 Till, whare ye sit on craps o' heather,
 Ye tine‡ your dam ;
 Freedom an' whisky gang thegither !
 Tak aff your dram

THE ORDINATION.

" For sense, they little owe to frugal Heav'n—
 To please the mob they hide the little giv'n." ,

KILMARNOCK wabsters, fidge§ an claw,
 An' pour your creeshie¶ nations ;
 An' ye wha leather rax** an' draw,
 Of a' denominations ;
 Swith!†† to the Laigh Kirk, ane an'
 An' there tak up your stations

* close.
 ‖ scratch.

† mist.
 ¶ greasie.

‡ lose.
 ** stretch.

§ shrug.
 †† be off

Then aff to Begbie's¹ in a raw,
 An' pour divine libations
 For joy this day.

Curst "Common-sense," that imp o' h-ll,
 Cam in wi' Maggie Lauder :²
 But Oliphant³ aft made her yell,
 An' Russell⁴ sair misca'd her :
 This day Mackinlay⁵ taks the flail,
 An' he's the boy will blaud* her !
 He'll clap a shangan† on her tail,
 An' set the bairns to daud her
 Wi' dirt this day.

Mak haste an' turn King David owre,
 And lilt wi' holy clangor ;
 O' double verse come gie us four,
 An' skirl up "the Bangor : " ‡
 This day the kirk kicks up a stoure,§
 Nae mair the knaves shall wrang her ;
 For Heresy is in her pow'r,
 And gloriously she'll whang her,
 Wi' pith this day.

Come, let a proper text be read,
 An' touch it aff wi' vigour,

* slap.

† a favourite psalm-tune.

‡ a cleft stick, or a thistle.

§ rumpus.

¹ Begbie's Inn, in a small court near the Laigh Kirk.

² Alluding to a scoffing ballad which was made on the admission of the late reverend and worthy Mr Lindsay to the "Laigh Kirk."—*R. B.*

³ Rev. James Oliphant, minister of Chapel of Ease, Kilmarnock, from 1764 to 1774.

⁴ Rev. John Russell of Kilmarnock, one of the "Twa Herds." He was successor to Oliphant.

⁵ Rev. James Mackinlay, subject of the present poem, ordained 6th April 1786. As a preacher, he became "a great favourite of the million."

How graceless Ham¹ leugh at his dad,
 Which made Canaan a nigger ;
 Or Phineas² drove the murdering blade,
 Wi' whore-abhorring rigour ;
 Or Zipporah,³ the scauldin jad,
 Was like a bluidy teeger,
 I' th' inn that day.

There, try his mettle on the creed,
 And bind him down wi' caution,—
 That stipend is a carnal weed
 He taks but for the fashion ;—
 And gie him o'er the flock to feed,
 And punish each transgression ;
 Especial, rams that cross the breed,
 Gie them sufficient threshin ;
 Spare them nae day.

Now auld Kilmarnock, cock thy tail,
 An' toss thy horns fu' canty ;*
 Nae mair thou'lt rowte † out-owre the dale,
 Because thy pasture's scanty ;
 For lapfu's large o' gospel kail
 Shall fill thy crib in plenty,
 An' runts ‡ o' grace the pick an' wale,
 No gi'en by way o' dainty,
 But ilka day.

Nae mair by "Babel's streams" we'll weep,
 To think upon our "Zion ;"
 And hing our fiddles up to sleep,
 Like baby-clouts a-drying !
 Come, screw the pegs wi' tunefu' cheep.
 And o'er the thairms § be tryin ;

* merry.

† low.

‡ roots of cabbage.

§ catgut.

¹ Genesis ix. 22.—*R. B.*² Numbers xxv. 8.—*R. B.*³ Exodus iv. 25.—*R. B.*

Oh, rare ! to see our elbucks * wheep,
 And a' like lamb-tails flyin,
 Fu' fast this day !

Lang, Patronage, wi' rod o' airn,
 Has shor'd † the Kirk's undoin ;
 As lately Fenwick, sair forfairn, ‡
 Has proven to its ruin :¹
 Our patron, honest man ! Glencairn,
 He saw mischief was brewin ;
 An' like a godly, elect bairn,
 He's waled § us out a true ane,
 And sound this day.

Now Robertson ² harangue nae mair,
 But steek || your gab ¶ for ever ;
 Or try the wicked town of Ayr,
 For there they'll think you clever :
 Or, nae reflection on your lear,
 Ye may commence a shaver ;
 Or to the Netherton ³ repair,
 An' turn a carpet weaver,
 Aff-hand this day.

Mu'trie ⁴ and you were just a match,
 We never had sic twa drones ;
 Auld "Hornie" did the Laigh Kirk watch,
 Just like a winkin baudrons,**

* elbows.

† attempted.

‡ distressed.

§ selected.

|| shut.

¶ mouth.

** cat.

¹ Rev. Wm. Boyd, a "Moderate," ordained pastor of Fenwick, June, 25 1782.

² Rev. John Robertson, colleague of Dr Mackinlay, ordained 1765, died 1798. He belonged to the "Common-sense" order of preachers.

³ A district of Kilmarnock, where carpet weaving was largely carried on.

⁴ The Rev. John Multrie, a "Moderate," whom Mackinlay succeeded.

And ay he catch'd the tither wretch,
 To fry them in his caudrons ;
 But now his Honor maun detach,
 Wi' a' his brimstone squadrons,
 Fast, fast this day.

See, see auld Orthodoxy's faes
 She's swingein thro' the city !
 Hark, how the nine-tail'd cat she plays !
 I vow it's unco pretty :
 There, Learning, with his Greekish face,
 Grunts out some Latin ditty ;
 And " Common-sense " is gaun, she says,
 To mak to Jamie Beattie ¹
 Her plaint this day.

But there's Morality himsel,
 Embracing all opinions ;
 Hear, how he gies the tither yell,
 Between his twa companions !
 See, how she peels the skin an' fell, *
 As ane were peelin onions !
 Now there, they're packèd aff to h-ll,
 An' banish'd our dominions,
 Henceforth this day.

O happy day ! rejoice, rejoice !
 Come bouse about the porter !
 Morality's demure decoys
 Shall here nae mair find quarter :
 Mackinlay, Russell, are the boys
 That heresy can torture ;

* bitter-tasting part.

¹ The poet, and author of an " Essay on Truth," who was reckoned to
 de with the moderate party in church matters.

They'll gie her on a rape a hoyse,
 And cove * her measure shorter
 By th' head some day.

Come, bring the tither mutchkin in,
 And here's—for a conclusion—
 To ev'ry "new-light ¹" mother's son,
 From this time forth, confusion !
 If mair they deave us wi' their din,
 Or patronage intrusion,
 We'll light a spunk, † and ev'ry skin,
 We'll rin them aff in fusion,
 Like oil some day.

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH.

" Friendship, mysterious cement of the soul !
 Sweet'ner of Life, and solder of Society !
 I owe thee much———"

BLAIR.

DEAR SMITH, the slee'st, pawkie thief,
 That e'er attempted stealth or rief ! ‡
 Ye surely hae some warlock-brief §
 Owre human hearts ;
 For ne'er a bosom yet was prief ||
 Against your arts.

For me, I swear by sun an' moon,
 An' ev'ry star that blinks ¶ aboon,
 Ye've cost me twenty pair o' shoon,
 Just gaun to see you ;
 An' ev'ry ither pair that's done,
 Mair taen I'm wi' you.

* cut.

† a brimstone match.

‡ robbery.

§ spell.

|| proof.

¶ twinkles.

¹ A cant-phrase in the West of Scotland, for those religious opinions which Dr Taylor of Norwich has defended so strenuously.—*R. B.*

That auld, capricious carlin, Nature,
 To mak amends for scrimpet * stature,
 She's turn'd you off, a human-creature
 On her first plan,
 And in her freaks, on ev'ry feature
 She's wrote the Man.

Just now I've taen the fit o' rhyme,
 My barmie noddle's † working prime.
 My fancy yerket ‡ up sublime,
 Wi' hasty summon ;
 Hae ye a leisure-moment's time
 To hear what's comin ?

Some rhyme a neibor's name to lash ;
 Some rhyme (vain thought !) for needfu' cash ;
 Some rhyme to court the countra clash, §
 An' raise a din ;
 For me, an aim I never fash ;
 I rhyme for fun.

The star that rules my luckless lot,
 Has fated me the russet coat,
 An' damn'd my fortune to the groat ;
 But, in requit,
 Has blest me with a random-shot
 O' countra wit.

This while my notion's taen a sklent,
 To try my fate in guid, black prent ;
 But still the mair I'm that way bent,
 Something cries " Hoolie ! ||
 I red ¶ you, honest man, tak tent ! **
 Ye'll shaw your folly ;

* stinted
 † Softly.

† excited brain.
 ¶ warn.

‡ tightened.
 ** heed.

§ gossip.

There's ither poets, much your betters,
 Far seen in Greek, deep men o' letters,
 Hae thought they had ensur'd their debtors,
 A' future ages ;
 Now moths deform, in shapeless tatters,
 Their unknown pages."

Then farewell hopes of laurel-boughs,
 To garland my poetic brows !
 Henceforth I'll rove where busy ploughs
 Are whistlin thrang,
 An' teach the lanely heights an' howes
 My rustic sang.

I'll wander on, wi' tentless heed
 How never-halting moments speed,
 Till fate shall snap the brittle thread ;
 Then, all unknown,
 I'll lay me with th' inglorious dead,
 Forgot and gone !

But why o' death begin a tale ?
 Just now we're living sound an' hale ;
 Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
 Heave Care o'er-side !
 And large, before Enjoyment's gale,
 Let's tak the tide.

This life, sae far's I understand,
 Is a' enchanted fairy-land,
 Where Pleasure is the magic-wand,
 That, wielded right,
 Maks hours like minutes, hand in hand,
 Dance by fu' light.

The magic-wand then let us wield ;
 For ance that five-an'-forty's speel'd,

See, crazy, weary, joyless eild,
 Wi' wrinkl'd face,
Comes hostin,* hirplin † owre the field,
 Wi' creepin pace.

When ance life's day draws near the gloamin,‡
Then fareweel vacant, careless roamin ;
An' fareweel cheerfu' tankards foamin,
 An' social noise :
An' fareweel dear, deluding woman,
 The joy of joys !

O Life ! how pleasant, in thy morning,
Young Fancy's rays the hills adorning !
Cold-pausing Caution's lesson scorning,
 We frisk away,
Like school-boys, at th' expected warning,
 To joy an' play.

We wander there, we wander here,
We eye the rose upon the brier,
Unmindful that the thorn is near,
 Among the leaves ;
And tho' the puny wound appear,
 Short while it grieves.

Some, lucky, find a flow'ry spot,
For which they never toil'd nor swat ;
They drink the sweet and eat the fat,
 But § care or pain ;
And haply eye the barren hut
 With high disdain.

With steady aim, some fortune chase ;
Keen hope does ev'ry sinew brace ;

* coughing.

† limping.

‡ twilight.

§ without.

Gie wealth to some be-ledger'd cit,
In cent. per cent. ;
But give me real, sterling wit,
And I'm content.

"While ye are pleas'd to keep me hale,
I'll sit down o'er my scanty meal,
Be't water-brose or muslin-kail,*
 Wi' chearfu' face,
As lang's the Muses dinna fail
 To say the grace."

An anxious e'e I never throws
Behint my lug, or by my nose ;
I jouk † beneath Misfortune's blows
As weel's I may ;
Sworn foe to sorrow, care, and prose,
I rhyme away.

O ye douce † folk that live by rule,
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm an' cool,
Compar'd wi' you--O fool ! fool ! fool !
How much unlike !
Your hearts are just a standing pool,
Your lives, a dyke ! §

Nae hair-brain'd, sentimental traces
In your unletter'd, nameless faces !
In *arioso* trills and graces
Ye never stray ;
But *gravissimo*, solemn basses
Ye hum away.

Ye are sae grave, nae doubt ye're wise ;
Nae ferly || tho' ye do despise

* thin broth.

† escape.

† serious.

§ wall.

I wonder.

And when the day had clos'd his e'e,
 Far i' the west,
 Ben i' the spence,* right pensivelic,
 I gaed to rest.

There, lanely by the ingle-cheek,
 I sat and ey'd the spewing reek,
 That fill'd, wi' hoast-provoking† smeeke,
 The auld clay biggin ;‡
 An' heard the restless rattons squeak
 About the riggin.

All in this mottie, misty clime,
 I backward mus'd on wasted time,
 How I had spent my youthfu' prime.
 An' done naething,
 But stringing blethers up in rhyme,
 For fools to sing.

Had I to guid advice but harket,
 I might, by this, hae led a market,
 Or strutted in a bank and clarket
 My cash-account ;
 While here, half-mad, half-fed, half-sarket,
 Is a' th' amount.

I started, mutt'ring "blockhead ! coof !"§
 And heav'd on high my wauket loof, ||
 To swear by a' yon starry roof,
 Or some rash aith,
 That I henceforth wad be rhyme-proof
 Till my last breath—

When click ! the string the snick did draw ;
 An' jee ! the door gaed to the wa' ;

parlour, or inner apartment.
 fool.

† cough exciting.
 || work-hardened palm.

‡ building.

An' by my ingle-lowe I saw,
 Now bleezin bright,
 A tight, outlandish hizzie, braw,
 Come full in sight.

Ye need na doubt, I held my whisht ;
 The infant aith, half-form'd, was crusht ;
 I glowr'd,* as eerie 's † I'd been dusht, ‡
 In some wild glen ;
 When sweet, like modest Worth, she blusht,
 An' steppèd ben.

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly-boughs
 Were twisted, gracefu', round her brows ;
 I took her for some Scottish Muse,
 By that same token ;
 And come to stop those reckless vows,
 Would soon been broken.

A "hair-brain'd, sentimental trace"
 Was strongly markèd in her face ;
 A wildly-witty, rustic grace
 Shone full upon her ;
 Her eye, ev'n turn'd on empty space,
 Beam'd keen with honor.

Down flow'd her robe, a tartan sheen,
 Till half a leg was scrimply seen ;
 An' such a leg ! my bonie Jean ¹
 Could only peer it ;
 Sae straught, sae taper, tight an' clean—
 Nane else came near it.

* stared.

† frightened.

‡ awed into stupor.

¹ When his poems were at the press, the author's irritation on account "My bonie Jean" caused him to alter the words to "My Bess, I ween," and so they stand in the Kilmarnock edition ; but in 1787, that irritation having subsided, Jean was restored to her place of honour in the poem.

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
My gazing wonder chiefly drew ;
Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling, threw
 A lustre grand ;
And seem'd, to my astonish'd view,
 A well-known land.

Here, rivers in the sea were lost ;
There, mountains to the skies were toss't :
Here, tumbling billows mark'd the coast,
 With surging foam ;
There, distant shone Art's lofty boast,
 The lordly dome.

Here, Doon pour'd down his far-fetch'd floods ;
There, well-fed Irwine stately thuds :
Auld hermit Ayr staw thro' his woods,
 On to the shore ;
And many a lesser torrent scuds,
 With seeming roar.

Low, in a sandy valley spread,
An ancient borough rear'd her head ;
Still, as in Scottish story read,
 She boasts a race
To ev'ry nobler virtue bred,
 And polish'd grace.¹

By stately tow'r, or palace fair,
Or ruins pendent in the air,
Bold stems of heroes, here and there,
 I could discern ;
Some seem'd to muse, some seem'd to dare,
 With feature stern.

¹ Here, in the first edition, *Duan First* came to a close ; the additional seven stanzas were appended in the second edition.

With deep-struck, reverential awe,
 The learned Sire and Son I saw :¹
 To Nature's God, and Nature's law,
 They gave their lore ;
 This, all its source and end to draw,
 That, to adore.

Brydon's brave ward² I well could spy,
 Beneath old Scotia's smiling eye ;
 Who call'd on Fame, low standing by,
 To hand him on,
 Where many a patriot-name on high,
 And hero shone.

DUAN SECOND.

With musing-deep, astonish'd stare,
 I view'd the heavenly-seeming Fair ;
 A whispering throb did witness bear
 Of kindred sweet,
 When with an elder sister's air
 She did me greet.

"All hail ! my own inspirèd bard !
 In me thy native Muse regard ;
 Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
 Thus poorly low ;
 I come to give thee such reward,
 As we bestow !

"Know, the great genius of this land
 Has many a light aerial band,

¹ Catrine, the seat of the late Doctor and present Professor Stewart. —
B. The father of Dugald Stewart was eminent in Mathematics.

² Colonel Fullerton.—*R. B.* He had travelled under the care of Patrick
 ydone, author of a well-known publication, "A Tour through Sicily and
 alta."

All chuse, as various they're inclin'd,
The various man.

“ When yellow waves the heavy grain,
The threat'ning storm some strongly rein ;
Some teach to meliorate the plain,
With tillage-skill ;
And some instruct the shepherd-train,
Blythe o'er the hill.

“ Some hint the lover's harmless wile ;
Some grace the maiden's artless smile ;
Some soothe the laborer's weary toil
For humble gains,
And make his cottage-scenes beguile
His cares and pains.

“ Some, bounded to a district-space,
Explore at large man's infant race,
To mark the embryotic trace
Of rustic bard ;
And careful note each opening grace,
A guide and guard.

“ Of these am I—Coila my name :
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling pow'r :
I mark'd thy embryo-tuneful flame,
Thy natal hour.

“ With future hope I oft would gaze
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely caroll'd, chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes ;
Fir'd at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

“ I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar ;
Or when the North his fleecy store
Drove thro’ the sky,
I saw grim Nature’s visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

“ Or when the deep green-mantled earth
Warm cherish’d ev’ry floweret’s birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In ev’ry grove ;
I saw thee eye the general mirth
With boundless love.

“ When ripen’d fields and azure skies
Call’d forth the reapers’ rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their ev’ning joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom’s swelling rise,
In pensive walk.

“ When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering, shot thy nerves along,
Those accents grateful to thy tongue,
Th’ adorèd *Name*,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To soothe thy flame.

“ I saw thy pulse’s maddening play,
Wild send thee Pleasure’s devious way,
Misled by Fancy’s meteor-ray,
By passion driven ;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from Heaven.

“ I taught thy manners-painting strains,
The loves, the ways of simple swains,

Till now, o'er all my wide domains
Thy fame extends ;
And some, the pride of Coila's plains,
Become thy friends.

"Thou canst not learn, nor I can show,
To paint with Thomson's landscape glow ;
Or wake the bosom-melting throe,
With Shenstone's art ;
Or pour, with Gray, the moving flow
Warm on the heart.

"Yet, all beneath th' unrivall'd rose,
The lowly daisy sweetly blows ;
Tho' large the forest's monarch throws
His army-shade,
Yet green the juicy hawthorn grows,
Adown the glade.

"Then never murmur nor repine ;
Strive in thy humble sphere to shine ;
And trust me, not Potosi's mine,
Nor king's regard,
Can give a bliss o'ermatching thine,
A rustic bard.

"To give my counsels all in one,
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan :
Preserve the dignity of Man,
With soul erect ;
And trust the Universal Plan
Will all protect.

"And wear thou *this*"—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head :

The polish'd leaves and berries red
 Did rustling play ;
 And, like a passing thought, she fled
 In light away.

[To Mrs Stewart of Stair Burns presented a manuscript copy of the Vision. That copy embraces about twenty stanzas which he cancelled when he came to print the piece in his Kilmarnock volume. Seven of these he restored in printing his second edition.]

SUPPRESSED STANZAS OF "THE VISION."

After 18th stanza of the text :—

With secret throes I marked that earth,
 That cottage, witness of my birth ;
 And near I saw, bold issuing forth
 In youthful pride,
 A Lindsay race of noble worth,
 Famed far and wide.

Where, hid behind a spreading wood,
 An ancient Pict-built mansion stood,
 I spied, among an angel brood,
 A female pair ;
 Sweet shone their high maternal blood,
 And father's air.¹

An ancient tower ² to memory brought
 How Dettingen's bold hero fought ;
 Still, far from sinking into nought,
 It owns a lord
 Who far in western climates fought,
 With trusty sword.

Among the rest I well could spy
 One gallant, graceful, martial boy,
 The *soldier* sparkled in his eye,
 A diamond water:

¹ Sundrum.—*R. B.* Hamilton of Sundrum was married to a sister of Colonel Montgomerie of Coilsfield.

² Stair.—*R. B.* That old mansion was then possessed by General Stewart and his lady, to whom the MS. was presented.

I blest that noble badge with joy,
That owned me *frater*.¹

After 20th stanza of the text :—

Near by arose a mansion fine,²
The seat of many a muse divine;
Not rustic muses such as mine,
With holly crown'd,
But th' ancient, tuneful, laurell'd Nine,
From classic ground.

I mourn'd the card that Fortune dealt,
To see where bonie Whitefoords dwelt;³
But other prospects made me melt,
That village near;⁴
There Nature, Friendship, Love, I felt,
Fond-mingling, dear!

Hail! Nature's pang, more strong than death!
Warm Friendship's glow, like kindling wrath!
Love, dearer than the parting breath
Of dying friend!
Not ev'n with life's wild devious path,
Your force shall end!

The Power that gave the soft alarms
In blooming Whitefoord's rosy charms,
Still threats the tiny, feather'd arms,
The barb'd dart,
While lovely Wilhelmina warms
The coldest heart.⁵

After 21st stanza of the text :—

Where Lugar leaves his moorland plaid,⁶
Where lately Want was idly laid,
I mark'd busy, bustling Trade,
In fervid flame,
Beneath a Patroness's aid,
Of noble name.

¹ Captain James Montgomerie, Master of St James' Lodge, Tarbolton, to which the author has the honour to belong.—*R. B.*

² Auchinleck.—*R. B.*

³ Ballochmyle.

⁴ Mauchline.

⁵ A compliment to Miss Wilhelmina Alexander as successor, in that locality, to Miss Maria Whitefoord.

⁶ Cumnock.—*R. B.*

Wild, countless hills I could survey,
 And countless flocks as wild as they;
 But other scenes did charms display,
 That better please,
 Where polish'd manners dwell with Gray,
 In rural ease.¹

Where Cessnock pours with gurgling sound ;²
 And Irwine, marking out the bound,
 Enamour'd of the scenes around,
 Slow runs his race,
 A name I doubly honor'd found,³
 With knightly grace.

Brydon's brave ward,⁴ I saw him stand,
 Fame humbly offering her hand,
 And near, his kinsman's rustic band,⁵
 With one accord,
 Lamenting their late blessed land
 Must change its lord.

The owner of a pleasant spot,
 Near sandy wilds, I last did note ;⁶
 A heart too warm, a pulse too hot
 At times, o'erran :
 But large in ev'ry feature wrote,
 Appear'd, the Man.

THE RANTIN DOG, THE DADDIE O'T.

Tune—"Whare 'll our gudeman lie."

O WHA my babie-clouts will buy?
 O wha will tent * me when I cry?
 Wha will kiss me where I lie?
 The rantin dog, the daddie o't.

O wha will own he did the faut?
 O wha will buy the groanin maut? †

* watch.

† refreshments for the nurse and gossips.

¹ Mr Farquhar Gray.—*R. B.*

² Auchinskieth.—*R. B.*

³ Caprington.—*R. B.*

⁴ Colonel Fullerton.—*R. B.*

⁵ Dr Fullerton.—*R. B.*

⁶ Orangefield.—*R. B.*

O wha will tell me how to ca't?
The rantin dog, the daddie o't.

When I mount the creepie-chair,*
Wha will sit beside me there?
Gie me Rob, I'll seek nae mair,
The rantin dog, the daddie o't.

Wha will crack † to me my lane?
Wha will mak me fidgin fain? ‡
Wha will kiss me o'er again?
The rantin dog, the daddie o't.

[The poet attached the following note to this production in the copy of the "Museum" which belonged to his friend Mr Riddell:—"I composed his song pretty early in life, and sent it to a young girl, a particular acquaintance of mine, who was at that time under a cloud."]

HERE'S HIS HEALTH IN WATER.

Tune—"The Job of Journey-work."

ALTHO' my back be at the wa',
And tho' he be the fautor; §
Altho' my back be at the wa',
Yet, here's his health in water.
O wae gae by his wanton sides,
Sae brawlie's he could flatter;
Till for his sake I'm slighted sair,
And dree || the kintra clatter:
But tho' my back be at the wa',
Yet here's his health in water!

[Stenhouse, in his note to this song, states that Burns threw it off inocular allusion to his own and Jean Armour's awkward predicament before their marriage.]

* the penance-stool in the church.

‡ eagerly fond.

§ defaulter.

† converse.

|| dread.

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID,
OR THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS.

My Son, these maxims make a rule,
An' lump them ay thegither ;
The *Rigid Righteous* is a fool,
The *Rigid Wise* anither :
The cleanest corn that e'er was dight
May hae some pyles o' caff in ;
So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
For random fits o' daffin.

SOLOMON.—Eccles. ch. vii. verse 16.

O YE wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neibours' fauts and folly !
Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water ;
The heapèt happer's ebbing still,
An' still the clap plays clatter.

Hear me, ye venerable core,
As counsel for poor mortals
That frequent pass douce Wisdom's door
For glakit * Folly's portals :
I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,
Would here propone defences—
Their donsie † tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,
And shudder at the niffer ; ‡
But cast a moment's fair regard,
What maks the mighty differ ?

* thoughtless.

† unlucky.

‡ exchange.

Discount what scant occasion gave,
That purity ye pride in ;
And (what's aft mair than a' the lave) *
Your better art o' hidin.

Think, when your castigated pulse
Gies now and then a wallop !
What ragings must his veins convulse,
That still eternal gallop !
Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
Right on ye scud your sea-way ;
But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
It maks an unco lee-way.

See Social Life and Glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmugrify'd, they're grown
Debauchery and Drinking :
O would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences ;
Or your more dreaded hell to state,
Damnation of expenses !

Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor Frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases ;
A dear-lov'd lad, convenience snug,
A treach'rous inclination ;
But, let me whisper i' your lug,
Ye're aiblins † nae temptation.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman ;
Tho' they may gang a kennin ‡ wrang,
To step aside is human :

* others.

† perhaps.

‡ admittedly.

One point must still be greatly dark,
 The moving *Why* they do it ;
 And just as lamely can ye mark,
 How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
 Decidedly can try us ;
 He knows each chord, its various tone,
 Each spring, its various bias :
 Then at the balance let's be mute,
 We never can adjust it ;
 What's done we partly may compute,
 But know not what's resisted.

[This is pre-eminently one of those poems whose lines become "mottoes of the heart." In all likelihood, the period in Burns' life we have now reached was the date of its composition : yet it is rather remarkable that he withheld it from publication in his Kilmarnock edition of that year.]

THE INVENTORY ;

IN ANSWER TO A MANDATE BY THE SURVEYOR
 OF THE TAXES.

SIR, as your mandate did request,
 I send you here a faithfu' list,
 O' gudes an' gear, * an' a' my graith, †
 To which I'm clear to gi'e my aith.

Imprimis, then, for carriage cattle,
 I hae four brutes o' gallant mettle,
 As ever drew before a pettle. ‡
 My *hand-afore's*§ a guid auld 'has been,'
 An' wight an' wilfu' a' his days been :
 My *hand-ahin's*|| a weel gaun fillie,

* substantial of any kind. † accoutrements.

§ fore-horse on the left-hand in the plough.—*R. B.*

|| hindmost on the left-hand in the plough.—*R. B.*

‡ plough-stick.

That aft has borne me hame frae Killie,²
 An' your auld borough mony a time,
 In days when riding was nae crime.
 But ance, when in my wooing pride
 I, like a blockhead, boost † to ride,
 The wilfu' creature sae I pat to,
 (L—d pardon a' my sins, an' that too !)
 I play'd my fillie sic a shavie,
 She's a' bedevil'd wi' the spavie.
 My *furr-ahin's* ‡ a wordy beast,
 As e'er in tug or tow was traced.
 The fourth's a Highland Donald hastie,
 A d—n'd red-wud § Kilburnie blastie !
 Foreby a cowl, || o' cowts the wale,
 As ever ran before a tail :
 Gin he be spar'd to be a beast,
 He'll draw me fifteen pund at least.
 Wheel-carriages I ha'e but few,
 Three carts, an' twa are feckly ¶ new ;
 An auld wheelbarrow, mair for token,
 Ae leg an' baith the trams are broken ;
 I made a poker o' the spin'le,
 An' my auld mither brunt the trin'le.**

For men, I've three mischievous boys,
 Run-deils for ranting an' for noise ;
 A gaudsman¹ ane, a thrasher t' other :
 Wee Davock hauds the nowt †† in fother.
 I rule them as I ought, discreetly,
 An' aften labour them completely ;

* Kilmarnock.—R. B.

† behaved.

‡ hindmost-horse on the right-hand in the plough.—R. B.

§ stark-mad.

|| colt.

¶ hardly.

** wheel.

†† cattle.

¹ A driver of the plough team : the name is derived from the practice of giving a gaud or prick in some countries where oxen are yoked to the plough.

An' ay on Sundays duly, nightly,
 I on the "Questions" *targe** them tightly;
 Till, faith! wee Davock's grown sae gleg,†
 Tho' scarcely langer than your leg,
 He'll screed ‡ you aff Effectual Calling, §
 As fast as ony in the dwelling.
 I've nane in female servan' station,
 (L—d keep me ay frae a' temptation!)
 I hae nae wife—and that my bliss is,
 An' ye have laid nae tax on misses;
 An' then, if kirk folks dinna clutch me,
 I ken the deevils darena touch me.
 Wi' weans I'm mair than weel contented,
 Heav'n sent me ane mair than I wanted:
 My sonsie,|| smirking, dear-bought Bess,
 She stares the daddy in her face,
 Enough of ought ye like but grace:
 But her, my bonie, sweet wee lady,
 I've paid enough for her already;
 An' gin ye tax her or her mither,
 By the L—d, ye'se get them a' thegither!

And now, remember, Mr Aiken,
 Nae kind of licence out I'm takin:
 Frae this time forth, I do declare
 I'se ne'er ride horse nor hizzie mair;
 Thro' dirt and dub for life I'll paidle, ¶
 Ere I sae dear pay for a saddle;
 My travel a', on foot I'll shank it,
 I've sturdy bearers, Gude be thankit!
 The kirk and you may tak' you that,
 It puts but little in your pat;

* cross-question.

† sharp.

‡ repeat.

§ a prominent question and answer in the church catechism.

|| plump.

¶ pick my steps.

Sae dinna put me in your beuk,
Nor for my ten white shillings leuk.

This list, wi' my ain hand I wrote it,
The day and date as under noted ;
Then know all ye whom it concerns,
Subscripsi huic, ROBERT BURNS.

MOSSGIEL, *February 22, 1786.*

[In May 1785, with a view to liquidate ten millions of unfunded debt, Pitt made a large addition to the number of taxed articles, and amongst these were female-servants. It became the duty of Mr Aiken, as x-surveyor for the district, to serve the usual notice on Burns, who on receipt of it made his return in the verses which form our text.]

TO JOHN KENNEDY, DUMFRIES HOUSE.

Now, Kennedy, if foot or horse
E'er bring you in by Mauchlin corse,
(Lord, man, there's lasses there wad force
A hermit's fancy ;
An' down the gate in faith they're worse,
An' mair unchancy).

But as I'm sayin, please step to Dow's,
An' taste sic gear as Johnie brews,
Till some bit callan bring me news
That ye are there ;
An' if we dinna hae a bouze,
I'se ne'er drink mair.

It's no I like to sit an' swallow,
Then like a swine to puke an' wallow ;
But gie me just a true good fallow,
Wi' right ingine,
And spunkie ance to mak us mellow,
An' then we'll shine.

A great man's smile ye ken fu' well,
Is ay a blest infection.

Tho', by his * banes wha in a tub
Match'd Macedonian Sandy!
On my ain legs thro' dirt and dub,
I independent stand ay,—

And when those legs to gude, warm kail,
Wi' welcome canna bear me,
A lee dyke-side, a sybow-tail,†
An' barley-scone shall cheer me.

Heaven spare you lang to kiss the breath
O' mony flow'ry simmers!
An' bless your bonie lasses baith,
I'm tauld they're loosome kimmers!‡

An' God bless young Dunaskin's laird,
The blossom of our gentry!
An' may he wear an auld man's beard,
A credit to his country.

[The poet thought so well of this little production that he included it in the Glenriddell collection of his early poems, where he states that it was an extempore composition, "wrote in Nanse Tinnock's, Mauchline." Craigen-gillan is a considerable estate in Carrick.]

TO A LOUSE.

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT CHURCH.

HA! whaur ye gaun, ye crowlin ferlie?§
Your impudence protects you sairly;
I canna say but ye strunt|| rarely,
Owre gauze and lace;

* Diogenes.
§ wonder.

† leak.
‡ strut.

‡ loveable queans.

Tho' faith! I fear, ye dine but sparely
On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin, blasted wonner,*
Detested, shunn'd by saunt an' sinner,
How daur ye set your fit upon her—
Sae fine a lady?
Gae somewhere else, and seek your dinner
On some poor body.

Swith! † in some beggar's hauffet ‡ squattle,
Wi' ither kindred, jumping cattle ;
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle,
In shoals and nations ;
Whaur horn nor bane § ne'er daur unsettle
Your thick plantations.

Now haud you there, ye're out o' sight,
Below the fatt'rels, || snug and tight ;
Na, faith ye yet ! ye'll no be right,
Till ye've got on it—
The verra tapmost, tow'rin height
O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth ! right bauld ye set your nose out,
As plump an' grey as ony groset : ¶
O for some rank, mercurial rozet,
Or fell, red smeddum,**
I'd gie you sic a hearty dose o't,
Wad dress your droddum, ††

I wad na been surpris'd to spy
You on an auld wife's flannen toy ; ‡‡

* indweller. † begone. ‡ side of the head. § small-toothed comb.
|| folds, or puckering. ¶ gooseberry. ** pungent stuff.
†† breech. ‡‡ old fashioned cap.

Or aiblins * some bit duddie boy,
On's wyliecoat ; †
But Miss's fine Lunardi ! ‡ fye !
How daur ye do't ?

O Jeany, dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abried !
Ye little ken what cursed speed
The blastie's makin :
Thae winks an' finger-ends, I dread,
Are notice takin.

O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursel as ithers see us !
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion :
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
An' ev'n devotion !

[Some admirers of Burns have expressed a wish that this poem had never been written; but the last stanza soon became a world-wide proverbial quotation; and if poetical merit were to be estimated by such notoriety, this piece would rank very high.]

INSCRIBED ON A WORK OF HANNAH MORE'S,
PRESENTED TO THE AUTHOR BY A LADY.

THOU flatt'ring mark of friendship kind,
Still may thy pages call to mind
The dear, the beauteous, donor ;
Tho' sweetly female ev'ry part,

* perhaps.

† under-jacket.

† balloon-shaped bonnet.¹

¹ Vincent Lunardi, on September 15, 1784, ascended from London in an air-balloon—the earliest attempt in Britain; and on 5th October 1785, he performed a like feat from Heriot's Green, at Edinburgh.

Yet such a head, and more—the heart
 Does both the sexes honor :
 She show'd her taste refin'd and just,
 When she selected thee ;
 Yet deviating, own I must,
 For sae approving me :
 But kind still I'll mind still
 The *giver* in the gift ;
 I'll bless her, an' wiss her
 A Friend aboon the lift.

[Upon no authority beyond reasonable surmise, we venture to say that the lady referred to in this inscription was Mrs Cunninghame of Enterkin, a daughter of Mrs Stewart of Stair, and a distant relative of Mr Robert Aiken.]

THE HOLY FAIR.¹

A robe of seeming truth and trust
 Hid crafty observation ;
 And secret hung, with poison'd cluist,
 The dirk of defamation :
 A mask that like the gorget show'd,
 Dye-varying on the pigeon ;
 And for a mantle large and broad,
 He wrapt him in *Religion*.

HYPOCRISY A-LA-MODE.

UPON a simmer Sunday morn,
 When Nature's face is fair,
 I walkèd forth to view the corn,
 An' snuff the caller * air.
 The rising sun owre Galston muirs
 Wi' glorious light was glintin ;
 The hares were hirplin † down the furrs,
 The lav'rocks they were chantin
 Fu' sweet that day.

* fresh.

† limping.

¹ "Holy Fair" is a common phrase in the west of Scotland for a sacramental occasion.—R. B.

As lightsomely I glowr'd abroad,
 To see a scene sae gay,
 Three hizzies, * early at the road,
 Cam skelpin up the way.
 Twa had manteeles o' dolefu' black,
 But ane wi' lyart † lining ;
 The third, that gaed a wee a-back,
 Was in the fashion shining,
 Fu' gay that day.

The twa appear'd like sisters twin,
 In feature, form, an' claes ;
 Their visage wither'd, lang an' thin,
 An' sour as ony slaes :
 The third cam up, hap-stap-an'-lowp,
 As light as ony lambie,
 An' wi' a curchie low did stoop,
 As soon as e'er she saw me,
 Fu' kind that day.

Wi' bonnet aff, quoth I, " Sweet lass,
 I think ye seem to ken me ;
 I'm sure I've seen that bonie face,
 But yet I canna name ye."
 Quo' she, an' laughin as she spak,
 An' taks me by the hands,
 " Ye, for my sake, hae gien the feck ‡
 Of a' the ten commands
 A screed § some day."

" My name is Fun—your cronie dear,
 The nearest friend ye hae ;
 An' this is Superstition here,
 An' that's Hypocrisy.
 I'm gaun to Mauchline ' holy fair,'
 To spend an' hour in daffin : ||

* wenchies.

† grey.

‡ greater portion.

§ rend.

|| sport.

Gin ye'll go there, yon runkl'd pair,
 We will get famous laughin
 At them this day."

Quoth I, "Wi' a' my heart, I'll do't ;
 I'll get my Sunday's sark on,
 An' meet you on the holy spot ;
 Faith, we'se hae fine remarkin !"
 Then I gaed hame at crowdie-time, *
 An' soon I made me ready ;
 For roads were clad, frae side to side,
 Wi' mony a wearie body,
 In droves that day.

Hiere farmers gash,† in ridin graith, ‡
 Gaed hoddin § by their cotters ;
 There swankies || young, in braw braid-claith,
 Are springin owre the gutters.
 The lasses, skelpin ¶ barefit, thrang,
 In silks an' scarlets glitter ;
 Wi' sweet-milk cheese, in mony a whang, **
 An' farls, †† bak'd wi' butter,
 Fu' crump that day.

When by the 'plate' we set our nose,
 Weel heapèd up wi' ha'pence,
 A greedy glowr 'black-bonnet' ‡‡ throws,
 An' we maun draw our tippence.
 Then in we go to see the show :
 On ev'ry side they're gath'rin ;
 Some carryin dails, some chairs an' stools,
 An' some are busy bleth'rin §§
 Right loud that day.

* breakfast-time. † sagacious. ‡ attire. § jolting.
 || strapping fellows. ¶ hastening. ** thick slice. †† cakes of shortbread.
 ‡‡ by-name for an elder. §§ talking nonsense.

Here stands a shed to fend * the show'rs,
 An' screen our countra gentry ;
 There 'Racer Jess,'¹ an' twa-three wh-res,
 Are blinkin at the entry.
 Here sits a raw o' tittlin jads,
 Wi' heavin breasts an' bare neck ;
 An' there a batch o' wabster lads,
 Blackguardin frae Kilmarnock,
 For fun this day.

Here some are thinkin on their sins,
 An' some upo' their claes ;
 Ane curses feet that fyl'd his shins,
 Anither sighs an' prays :
 On this hand sits a chosen swatch,†
 Wi' screw'd-up, grace-proud faces ;
 On that a set o' chaps, at watch,
 Thrang winkin on the lasses
 To chairs that day.

O happy is that man, an' blest !
 Nae wonder that it pride him !
 Whase ain dear lass, that he likes best,
 Comes clinkin down beside him !
 Wi' arm repos'd on the chair back,
 He sweetly does compose him ;
 Which, by degrees, slips round her neck,
 An's loof upon her bosom,
 Unkend that day.²

* ward off.

† sample.

¹ February 1813, died at Mauchline, Janet Gibson—the "Racer Jess" of Burns' "Holy Fair," remarkable for her pedestrian feats. She was a daughter of "Poosie Nansie" who figures in "The jolly Beggars."—*News-aper Obituary*.

² "This verse sets boldly out with a line of a psalm. It is the best description ever was drawn. 'Unkend that day' surpasses all."—*James* 1888.

Now a' the congregation o'er
Is silent expectation ;
For Moodie speels the holy door,¹
Wi' tidings o' damnation :
Should *Hornie*, as in ancient days,
'Mang sons o' God present him,
The vera sight o' Moodie's face,
To 's ain het hame had sent him
Wi' fright that day.

Hear how he clears the points o' Faith
Wi' rattlin and wi' thumpin !
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He's stampin, an' he's jumpin !
His lengthen'd chin, his turned-up snout,
His eldritch * squeel an' gestures,
O how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantharidian plaisters
On sic a day !

But hark ! the tent has chang'd its voice ;
There's peace an' rest nae langer ;
For a' the real judges rise,
They canna sit for anger,
Smith² opens out his cauld harangues,
On practice and on morals ;
An' aff the godly pour in thrangs,
To gie the jars an' barrels
A lift that day.

* unearthly.

¹ Rev. Alexander Moodie of Riccarton, one of the heroes of the "Twa Herds." Trans. from Culross 1762. Died Feb. 15, 1799.

² Rev. George (subsequently Dr) Smith of Galston, referred to in the "Twa Herds" and also in the "Kirk's Alarm." Ord. 1778. Died 1823.

What signifies his barren shine,
 Of moral powers an' reason ?
 His English style, an' gesture fine
 Are a' clean out o' season.
 Like Socrates or Antonine,
 Or some auld pagan heathen,
 The *moral man* he does define,
 But ne'er a word o' *faith* in
 That's right that day.

In guid time comes an antidote
 Against sic poison'd nostrum ;
 For Peebles,¹ frae the water-fit,
 Ascends the holy rostrum :
 See, up he's got the word o' God,
 An' meek an' mim has view'd it,
 While 'Common-sense' has taen the road,
 An' aff, an' up the Cowgate²
 Fast, fast that day.

Wee Miller³ niest, the Guard relieves,
 An' Orthodoxy raibles,
 Tho' in his heart he weel believes,
 An' thinks it auld wives' fables :
 But faith ! the birkie wants a manse,
 So, cannilie he hums them ;
 Altho' his carnal wit an' sense
 Like hafflins-wise o'ercomes him
 At times that day.

¹ Rev. Wm. Peebles of "The Water-fit," or Newton-upon-Ayr. Ord. 78, made a D.D. in 1795, and died in 1825, aged 74.

² A street so called which faces the tent in Mauchline.—*R. B.*

³ Rev. Alex. Miller, afterwards of Kilmaurs, a short, paunchy man, supposed to be at heart a "moderate." Ord. in Kilmaurs 1788. Died in 1804.

Now butt an' ben the change-house fills,
 Wi' yill-caup commentators ;
 Here's cryin out for bakes and gills,
 An' there the pint-stowp clatters ;
 While thick an' thrang, an' loud an' lang,
 Wi' logic an' wi' scripture,
 They raise a din, that in the end
 Is like to breed a rupture
 O' wrath that day.

Leeze me on drink ! it gies us mair
 Than either school or college ;
 It ken'les wit, it waukens lear, *
 It pangs † us fou o' knowledge :
 Be't whisky-gill or penny-wheep,
 Or ony stronger potion,
 It never fails, on drinkin deep,
 To kittle up our notion,
 By night or day.

The lads an' lasses, blythely bent
 To mind baith saul an' body,
 Sit round the table, weel content,
 An' steer about the toddy :
 On this ane's dress, an' that ane's leuk,
 They're makin observations ;
 While some are cozie i' the neuk,
 An' forming assignations
 To meet some day.

But now the L—'s ain trumpet touts,
 Till a' the hills are rairin, ‡
 And echoes back-return the shouts ;
 Black Russell is na sparín : ¹

* learning.

† crams.

‡ roaring with echo.

¹ Rev. John Russell, one of the "Twa Herds," and "Rumble John" the *Kirk's Alarm*. Ord. in Kilmarnock 1774. Called to Stirling 1800.

His piercin words, like highlan' swords,
 Divide the joints an' marrow ;
 His talk o' Hell, whare devils dwell,
 Our vera "sauls does harrow"¹
 Wi' fright that day !

A vast, unbottom'd, boundless pit,
 Fill'd fou o' lowin brunstane,
 Whase ragin flame, an' scorching heat,
 Wad melt the hardest whun-stane !
 The half-asleep start up wi' fear,
 An' think they hear it roarin ;
 When presently it does appear,
 'Twas but some neibor snorin
 Asleep that day.

'Twad be owre lang a tale to tell,
 How mony stories past ;
 An' how they crouded to the yill,
 When they were a' dismiss ;
 How drink gaed round, in cogs an' caups,
 Among the furms an' benches ;
 An' cheese an' bread, frae women's laps,
 Was dealt about in lunches,
 An' dawds that day.

In comes a gawsie,* gash † guidwife,
 An' sits down by the fire,
 Syne draws her kebbuck ‡ an' her knife ;
 The lasses they are shyer :
 The auld guidmen, about the grace,
 Frae side to side they bother ;

* jolly.

† sagacious.

‡ cheese.

¹ Shakespeare's "Hamlet."—*R. B.*

Till some ane by his bonnet lays,
 An' gies them't, like a tether,
 Fu' lang that day.

Waesucks !* for him that gets nae lass,
 Or lasses that hae naething !
 Sma' need has he to say a grace,
 Or melvie † his braw claithing !
 O wives, be mindfu' ance yoursel
 How bonie lads ye wanted ;
 An' dinna for a kebbuck-heel ‡
 Let lasses be affronted
 On sic a day !

Now 'Clinkumbell,' wi' rattlin tow,
 Begins to jow an' croon ;
 Some swagger hame the best they dow,
 Some wait the afternoon.
 At slaps § the billies halt a blink,
 Till lasses strip their shoon :
 Wi' faith an' hope, an' love an' drink,
 They' a' in famous tune
 For crack that day.

How many hearts this day converts
 O' sinners and o' lasses !
 Their hearts o' stane, gin night, are gane
 As saft as ony flesh is :
 There's some are fou o' love divine ;
 There's some are fou o' brandy ;
 An' mony jobs that day begin,
 May end in 'houghmagandie'
 Some ither day.

[Mr Lockhart, after commending the "Cottar's Saturday Night," in eloquent terms, makes this observation,—“That the same man should have produced that poem and the 'Holy Fair' about the same time, will ever

* Alas.

† soil with meal.

‡ end of a cheese.

§ stiles.

continue to move wonder and regret." But the world's "regret" in this matter has been very evanescent; for, although the abuses and absurdities were censured, in connexion with rural celebrations of the communion, have happily disappeared, it cannot be said that the lessons conveyed in the attire are no longer necessary.

The communion was administered at Mauchline in those days but once a year, namely, on the second Sunday of August.]

SONG, COMPOSED IN SPRING.

Tune—"Johnny's Grey Brecks."

AGAIN rejoicing Nature sees

Her robe assume its vernal hues :

Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,

All freshly steep'd in morning dews.

Chorus.—And maun I still on Menie doat,

And bear the scorn that's in her e'e?

For it's jet, jet-black, an' it's like a hawk,

An' it winna let a body be.¹

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,

In vain to me the vi'lets spring ;

In vain to me in glen or shaw,

The mavis and the lintwhite sing.

And maun I still, &c.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,

Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks ;

But life to me's a weary dream,

A dream of ane that never wauks.

And maun I still, &c.

'The wanton coot the water skims,

Amang the reeds the ducklings cry,

¹ This chorus is part of a song composed by a gentleman in Edinburgh, a particular friend of the author's. Menie is the common abbreviation of Mariamne.—R. B. More correctly, it is the abbreviate of Marion.

To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
 Thou bonie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neibor sweet,
 The bonie lark, companion meet,
 Bending thee 'mang the dewy weat,
 Wi' spreckl'd breast !
 When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
 The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
 Upon thy early, humble birth ;
 Yet cheerfully thou glinted * forth
 Amid the storm,
 Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
 Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
 High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield ;
 But thou, beneath the random bield †
 O' clod or stane,
 Adorns the histie ‡ stibble field,
 Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
 Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
 Thou lifts thy unassuming head
 In humble guise ,
 But now the share uptears thy bed,
 And low thou lies !

Such is the fate of artless maid,
 Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade !
 By love's simplicity betray'd,
 And guileless trust ;
 Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid
 Low i' the dust.

* sparkled.

† shelter.

‡ dry.

With stern-resolv'd, despairing eye,
 I see each aimèd dart ;
 For one has cut my dearest tie,
 And quivers in my heart.
 Then low'ring, and pouring,
 The storm no more I dread ;
 Tho' thick'ning, and black'ning,
 Round my devoted head.

And thou grim Pow'r by life abhorr'd,
 While life a pleasure can afford,
 Oh ! hear a wretch's pray'r !
 No more I shrink appall'd, afraid ;
 I court, I beg thy friendly aid,
 To close this scene of care !
 When shall my soul, in silent peace,
 Resign life's joyless day—
 My weary heart its throbbings cease,
 Cold mould'ring in the clay ?
 No fear more, no tear more,
 To stain my lifeless face,
 Enclaspèd, and graspèd,
 Within thy cold embrace !

[Here the tone of the closing stanza of the "Daisy" is taken up, and the theme expanded into a little ode.]

THE LAMENT,

OCCASIONED BY THE UNFORTUNATE ISSUE OF A
 FRIEND'S AMOUR.

"Alas ! how oft does goodness wound itself,
 And sweet affection prove the spring of woe !"

HOME.

O THOU pale orb that silent shines
 While care-untroubled mortals sleep !
 Thou seest a wretch who inly pines,
 And wanders here to wail and weep !

With woe I nightly vigils keep,
Beneath thy wan, unwarming beam ;
And mourn, in lamentation deep,
How life and love are all a dream !

I joyless view thy rays adorn
The faintly-markèd, distant hill ;
I joyless view thy trembling horn,
Reflected in the gurgling rill :
My fondly-fluttering heart, be still !
Thou busy pow'r, remembrance, cease !
Ah ! must the agonizing thrill
For ever bar returning peace !

No idly-feign'd, poetic pains,
My sad, love-lorn lamentings claim :
No shepherd's pipe—Arcadian strains ;
No fabled tortures, quaint and tame.
The plighted faith, the mutual flame,
The oft-attested pow'rs above,
The promis'd father's tender name ;
These were the pledges of my love !

Encircled in her clasping arms,
How have the raptur'd moments flown !
How have I wish'd for fortune's charms,
For her dear sake, and her's alone !
And, must I think it ! is she gone,
My secret heart's exulting boast ?
And does she heedless hear my groan ?
And is she ever, ever lost ?

Oh ! can she bear so base a heart,
So lost to honour, lost to truth,
As from the fondest lover part,
The plighted husband of her youth ?
Alas ! life's path may be unsmooth !
Her way may lie thro' rough distress !

Then, who **her** pangs and pains will soothe,
Her sorrows share, and make them less?

Ye wingèd hours that o'er us pass'd,
Enraptur'd more, the more enjoy'd,
Your dear remembrance in my breast
My fondly-treasur'd thoughts employ'd :
That breast, how dreary now, and void,
For her too scanty once of room !
Ev'n ev'ry ray of hope destroy'd,
And not a wish to gild the gloom !

The morn, that warns th' approaching day,
Awakes me up to toil and woe ;
I see the hours in long array,
That I must suffer, lingering slow :
Full many a pang, and many a throe,
Keen recollection's direful train,
Must wring my soul, ere Phœbus, low,
Shall kiss the distant western main.

And when my nightly couch I try,
Sore harass'd out with care and grief,
My toil-beat nerves, and tear-worn eye,
Keep watchings with the nightly thief :
Or if I slumber, fancy, chief,
Reigns, haggard-wild, in sore affright :
Ev'n day, all-bitter, brings relief
From such a horror-breathing night.

O thou bright queen, who, o'er th' expanse
Now highest reign'st, with boundless sway !
Oft has thy silent-marking glance
Observ'd us, fondly-wand'ring, stray !
The time, unheeded, sped away,
While love's luxurious pulse beat high,
Beneath thy silver-gleaming ray,
To mark the mutual-kindling eye.

Oh ! scenes in strong remembrance set !
Scenes, never, never to return !
Scenes, if in stupor I forget,
Again I feel, again I burn !
From ev'ry joy and pleasure torn,
Life's weary vale I'll wander thro' ;
And hopeless, comfortless, I'll mourn
A faithless woman's broken vow !

[This highly-finished poem contains passages nearly equal to the author's Address to "Mary in heaven." The reader will observe, that every stanza contains four lines that rhyme together,—a feat in versification which the poem called "A Dream" again exhibits in a twofold degree—a double *somersault* of rhyme, in short.]

DESPONDENCY—AN ODE.

OPPRESS'D with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I set me down and sigh ;
O life ! thou art a galling load,
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I !
Dim-backward as I cast my view,
What sick'ning scenes appear !
What sorrows yet may pierce me through,
Too justly I may fear !
Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom ;
My woes here shall close ne'er
But with the closing tomb !

Happy ! ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard !

Ev'n when the wishèd end's denied,
Yet while the busy means are plied,
They bring their own reward :
Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet ev'ry sad returning night,
And joyless morn the same !
You, bustling and justling,
Forget each grief an' pain ;
I, listless, yet restless,
Find ev'ry prospect vain.

How blest the solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
Within his humble cell,
The cavern, wild with tangling roots—
Sits o'er his newly gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well !
Or haply, to his ev'ning thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought,
A faint, collected dream ;
While praising, and raising
His thoughts to heav'n on high,
As wand'ring, meand'ring,
He views the solemn sky.

Than I, no lonely hermit plac'd
Where never human footstep trac'd,
Less fit to play the part ;
The lucky moment to improve,
And just to stop, and just to move,
With self-respecting art :
But ah ! those pleasures, loves, and joys,
Which I too keenly taste,

The solitary can despise—
 Can want, and yet be blest !
 He needs not, he heeds not,
 Or human love or hate ;
 Whilst I here must cry here
 At perfidy ingrate !

O enviable early days,
 When dancing thoughtless pleasure's maze,
 To care, to guilt unknown !
 How ill exchang'd for riper times,
 To feel the follies, or the crimes,
 Of others, or my own !
 Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport,
 Like linnets in the bush,
 Ye little know the ills ye court,
 When manhood is your wish !
 The losses, the crosses,
 That active man engage ;
 The fears all, the tears all,
 Of dim declining Age !

[In this poem, the same theme as that pursued through the four preceding pieces is exhausted in a very satisfactory manner.]

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ., MAUCHLINE,
 RECOMMENDING A BOY.

Mossdaville, May 3, 1786.

I HOLD it, sir, my bounden duty
 To warn you how that "Master Tootie,"
 Alias, "Laird M'Gaun,"
 Was here to hire yon lad away
 'Bout whom ye spak the tither day,
 An' wad hae don't aff han' ; *

* at once.

But lest he learn the callan * tricks —
 An' faith I muckle doubt him—
 Like scrapin out auld Crummie's nicks, †
 An' tellin lies about them ;
 As lieve then, ‡ I'd have then,
 Your clerkship he should sair, §
 If sae be ye may be
 Not fitted othertwhere.

Altho' I say't, he's gleg || enough,
 An' bout a house that's rude an' rough,
 The boy might learn to swear ;
 But then wi' *you* he'll be sae taught,
 An' get sic fair example straught,
 I hae na ony fear.
 Ye'll catechise him, every quirk,
 An' shore ¶ him weel wi' "hell ;"
 An' gar him follow to the kirk—
 Ay when ye gang yoursel.
 If ye then, maun be then
 Frae hame this comin Friday,
 Then please sir, to lea'e, sir,
 The orders wi' your lady.

My word of honour I hae gi'en,
 In Paisley John's, ** that night at e'en,
 To meet the "warld's worm ;" ††
 To try to get the twa to gree,
 An' name the airles ‡‡ an' the fee,
 In legal mode an' form :
 I ken he weel a *snick* can draw, §§
 When simple bodies let him ;

* boy. † natural rings on the cow's horns. ‡ willingly. § serve
 || sharp. ¶ threaten. ** Dow's Inn. †† avaricious reptile.
 ‡‡ earnest of a bargain. §§ take advantage by fraud.

An' if a Devil be at a',
 In faith he's sure to get him.
 To phrase you an' praise you,
 Ye ken your Laureat scorns :
 The pray'r still, you share still,
 Of grateful MINSTREL BURNS.

[This off-hand production explains itself. The poet was about to part with one of the boys on his farm, whose services were coveted by "Master Tootie," a dishonest dealer in cows. The boy had also attracted the attention of Gavin Hamilton, and Burns, who much preferred that the boy should serve Hamilton, wrote this note to him by way of warning.

In the text, the cowdealer is charged with the dishonest practice of scraping off the natural ridges from the horns of cattle to disguise their age. Another definition of "a sneck-drawer" is a thief who will steal imperceptibly into a house by gently drawing the sneck or bar.]

VERSIFIED REPLY TO AN INVITATION.

SIR,

Yours this moment I unseal,
 And faith I'm gay and hearty !
 To tell the truth and shame the deil,
 I am as fou as Bartie :
 But Foorsday, sir, my promise leal,
 Expect me o' your partie,
 If on a beastie I can speil,
 Or hurl in a cartie.

Yours,

ROBERT BURNS.

MAUCHLIN, *Monday night, 10 o'clock.*

[The English reader may be here informed that Thursday is, in some parts of Scotland, pronounced as written in line fifth of the verses ; and it is necessary to explain that "Bartie" is one of the many names given to the devil by Ayrshire peasants.]

SONG—WILL YE GO TO THE INDIES,
MY MARY?*Tune*—"Ewe-Bughts, Marion."

WILL ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
Across th' Atlantic's roar?

O sweet grows the lime and the orange,
And the apple on the pine;
But a' the charms o' the Indies
Can never equal thine.

I hae sworn by the Heavens to my Mary,
I hae sworn by the Heavens to be true;
And sae may the Heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand;
O plight me your faith, my Mary,
Before I leave Scotia's strand.

We hae plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join;
And curst be the cause that shall part us!
The hour and the moment o' time!

[This song, addressed to the living Mary Campbell, was composed at some date apparently from the middle of March to 14th May 1786. Whether he was then serving as a nursery-maid with Gavin Hamilton, in Mauchline, or in service elsewhere, it is impossible to determine. The popular belief is that Mary was byres-woman or dairy-maid at Coilsfield House, when Burns set his affections on her; but that idea has no foundation that we are aware of, beyond a traditional conjecture.

The poet, in his autobiography, after referring to his distraction caused by Jean's supposed "perfidy," says—"I gave up my part of the farm to

my brother, and made what little preparation was in my power for Jamaica; but before leaving my native country for ever, I resolved to publish my poems." On 20th March, he arranged to meet Robert Muir at Kilmarnock. to forward that object; and on 3rd April, he was just "sending his proposals to the press." One would conclude that the work of arranging and preparing his poems for the printer—not to mention his industrious composing of fresh poems to fill the volume—was enough to occupy his head and hands, without the introduction of the Highland Mary episode at such a time. Nevertheless, he did manage, amid all these engagements, to cultivate the "pretty long tract of reciprocal attachment" which preceded the final parting with Mary on Sunday, 14th May. Such were the strange circumstances under which this song was composed.]

MY HIGHLAND LASSIE, O.

NAE gentle* dames, tho' ne'er sae fair,
Shall ever be my muse's care :
Their titles a' are empty show ;
Gie me my Highland lassie, O.

Chorus.—Within the glen sae bushy, O,
Aboon the plain sae rashy, O,
I set me down wi' right guid will,
To sing my Highland lassie, O.

O were yon hills and vallies mine,
Yon palace and yon gardens fine!
The world then the love should know
I bear my Highland lassie, O.

But fickle fortune frowns on me,
And I maun cross the raging sea ;
But while my crimson currents flow,
I'll love my Highland lassie, O.

Altho' thro' foreign climes I range,
I know her heart will never change,
For her bosom burns with honor's glow,
My faithful Highland lassie, O.

* high-born.

For her I'll dare the billow's roar,
 For her I'll trace a distant shore,
 That Indian wealth may lustre throw
 Around my Highland lassie, O.

She has my heart, she has my hand,
 By secret troth and honor's band !
 'Till the mortal stroke shall lay me low.
 I'm thine, my Highland lassie, O.

Farewell the glen sae bushy, O !
 Farewell the plain sae rashy, O !
 To other lands I now must go,
 To sing my Highland lassie, O.

[The accompanying cuts represent very faithfully the inscriptions and symbolic markings on the bible presented by Burns to Mary at their parting. The printer's date on the title-page is 1782. When Mary died in October 1786, the volumes were taken care of by her mother, who survived till August 1828. Several years before that event, she had presented the bible to Mary's surviving sister, Anne, the wife of James Anderson, a stone-mason. That generation had passed away, when the precious relic, together with a lock of *Highland Mary's* hair, turned up at Montreal, in Canada, about the year 1840, whither they had been carried by William Anderson, a son of Mary's sister. Several Scottish residents of that city subscribed and purchased the relics from Anderson, and deposited them in the poet's monument at Ayr on 1st January 1841.

An examination of those sacred relics suggests the probability that poor Mary, on seeing the certain approach of death, had wilfully erased her own name and that of her poet lover, by wetting the writing and drawing her fingers across it, obliterating the surnames as they now appear. The likelihood is, that Burns, in the whirl of excitement which immediately followed the "Second Sunday of May" 1786, forgot his vows to poor Mary, and that she, heartsore at his neglect, deleted the names from this touching memorial of their secret betrothment. Notwithstanding all the gossip that has been risked on the subject, our impression is that—

"She never told her love,
 But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
 Feed on her damask cheek"—

that, in short, she came to the same conclusion as poor Olivia, in the "Vicar of Wakefield," did:—

"The only art to give repentance to her lover,
 And wring his bosom, is to die."

On the fly-leaf of Volume I. of the bible, the name, "Mary Campbell," followed by the poet's mason-mark, had been inscribed: the latter is still nearly entire; but the name has been almost completely erased, thus:—

M



The corresponding blank-leaf in Volume II. had contained the poet's name and address, with the mason-mark subjoined; but these also have been subjected to an erasing process; and now we can only trace as follows:—

*Robert Burns
Mason*



If Mary sunk into the grave without revealing the fact of her betrothal to Burns, it seems equally certain that Burns never whispered her name to a living soul till three years after her decease. It was only when the surpassing beauty and pathos of his sublime dirge—"To Mary in Heaven,"

awakened a curiosity which he could not avoid in some degree to satisfy, that he uttered a few vague particulars of her story. It is a mysterious episode in the life of Burns, of which the world can never learn the full facts. We incline to give assent to the utterance of his biographer, Dr Waddell:—
 'In connection with this there was neither guilt, nor the shadow of guilt in his conscience;' but when we find Burns, after eighteen months experience of loving wedlock with his own Jean, suddenly appealing to the shade of Mary in these words:—

"Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?

Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?"

we feel constrained to say, "If this is not the language of remorse, what is it?"]

Vol. I.

And ye shall not swear
 by My Name falsely—
 ——— I am the LORD.
 Levit: 19th chap: 12th Verse



I. II.

— Thou shalt not forswear
 thyself, but shalt perform
 unto the LORD thine
 Oath. ———
 math: 5 (ch. 33) Verse

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

May —, 1786.

I LANG hae thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Tho' it should serve nae ither end
Than just a kind memento :
But how the subject-theme may gang,
Let time and chance determine ;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang ;
Perhaps, turn out a sermon.

Ye'll try the world soon, my lad ;
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye'll find mankind an unco squad,
And muckle they may grieve ye :
For care and trouble set your thought,
Ev'n when your end's attained ;
And a' your views may come to nought,
Where ev'ry nerve is strained.

I'll no say, men are villains a' ;
The real, harden'd wicked,
Wha hae nae check but human law,
Are to a few restricket ;
But, och ! mankind are unco weak,
An' little to be trusted ;
If *self* the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted !

Yet they wha fa' in fortune's strife,
Their fate we shouldna censure ;
For still, th' important end of life
They equally may answer :

A man may hae an honest heart,
Tho' poortith * hourly stare him ;
A man may tak a neibor's part,
Yet hae nae cash to spare him.

Ay free, aff han', your story tell,
When wi' a bosom crony ;
But still keep something to yoursel
Ye scarcely tell to ony :
Conceal yoursel as weel's ye can
Frae critical dissection ;
But keek † thro' ev'ry other man,
Wi' sharpen'd, sly inspection.

The sacred lowe ‡ o' weel-plac'd love,
Luxuriantly indulge it ;
But never tempt th' illicit rove,
Tho' naething should divulge it :
I wave the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard of concealing ;
But, och ! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling !

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her ;
And gather gear by ev'ry wile
That's justify'd by honor ;
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Nor for a train attendant ;
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent.

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,
To haud the wretch in order ;
But where ye feel your honour grip,
Let that ay be your border :

* poverty

† look stealthily.

‡ flame.

Its slightest touches, instant pause—
Debar a' side-pretences ;
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences.

The great Creator to revere,
Must sure become the creature ;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And ev'n the rigid feature :
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,
Be complaisance extended ;
An atheist-laugh's a poor exchange
For Deity offended !

When ranting round in pleasure's ring,
Religion may be blinded ;
Or if she gie a random sting,
It may be little minded ;
But when on life we're tempest-driv'n—
A conscience but a canker—
A correspondence fix'd wi' Heav'n,
Is sure a noble anchor !

Adieu, dear, amiable youth !
Your heart can ne'er be wanting !
May prudence, fortitude, and truth,
Erect your brow undaunting !
In ploughman phrase, " God send you speed,"
Still daily to grow wiser ;
And may ye better reck the rede,*
Than ever did th' adviser !

[The young friend here so sagaciously addressed was Andrew Aiken, son of the poet's early patron Robert Aiken, to whom the "Cottar's Saturday Night" is inscribed. He afterwards engaged in mercantile pursuits in Liverpool, where he prospered, and was ultimately appointed English consul at Riga, at which port he died in 1831.

* use the lesson.

In a holograph copy of this epistle, dated "Mossgiel, May 15th, 1786," the following additional stanza is introduced, immediately after the sixth verse:—

"If ye hae made a step aside—
Some hap mistake o'erta'en you,
Yet still keep up a decent pride,
And ne'er o'er far demean you;
Time comes wi' kind oblivious shade,
And daily darker sets it;
And if nae mair mistakes are made,
The warld soon forgets it."]

ADDRESS OF BEELZEBUB.

To the Right Honorable the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Right Honorable and Honorable the Highland Society, which met on the 23rd of May last, at the Shakspeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways and means to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders who, as the Society were informed by Mr M'Kenzie of Applecross, were so audacious as to attempt an escape from their lawful lords and masters whose property they are, by emigrating from the lands of Mr Macdonald of Glengary to the wilds of Canada, in search of that fantastic thing—LIBERTY.

LONG life, my lord, an' health be yours,
Unskaith'd* by hunger'd Highland boors;
Lord grant nae duddie,† desperate beggar,
Wi' dirk, claymore, and rusty trigger,
May twin‡ auld Scotland o' a life
She likes—as lambkins like a knife.

Faith, you and Applecross were right
To keep the Highland hounds in sight:
I doubt na! they wad bid § nae better,
Than let them ance out owre the water,
Then up amang thae lakes and seas,
They'll mak what rules and laws they please:
Some daring Hancoke, or a Franklin,
May set their Highland bluid a-ranklin;
Some Washington again may head them,
Or some Montgomery, fearless, lead them;

* unharmed.

† ragged.

‡ deprive.

§ offer.

Till (God knows what may be effected
 When by such heads and hearts directed),
 Poor dunghill sons of dirt and mire
 May to Patrician rights aspire !
 Nae sage North now, nor sager Sackville,
 To watch and premier o'er the pack vile,—
 An' whare will ye get Howes and Clintons
 To bring them to a right repentance—
 To cove the rebel generation,
 An' save the honor o' the nation ?
They, an' be d—d ! what right hae they
 To meat, or sleep, or light o' day ?
 Far less—to riches, pow'r, or freedom,
 But what your lordship likes to gie them ?

But hear, my lord ! Glengary, hear !
 Your hand's owre light on them, I fear ;
 Your factors, grieves, trustees, and bailies,
 I canna say but they do gaylies ;*
 They lay aside a' tender mercies,
 An' tirl† the hallions ‡ to the birses ; §
 Yet while they're only poind't || and herriet, ¶
 They'll keep their stubborn Highland spirit :
 But smash them ! crash them a' to spails,**
 An' rot the dyvors †† i' the jails !
 The young dogs, swinge them to the labour ;
 Let wark an' hunger mak them sober !
 The hizzies, †† if they're aughtlins fawsont, §§
 Let them in Drury-lane be lesson'd !
 An' if the wives an' dirty brats
 Come thiggin |||| at your doors an' yetts,
 Flaffin wi' duds, an' grey wi' beas', ¶¶
 Frightin away your ducks an' geese ;

* pretty well.

|| distrained.

‡‡ girls.

† strip.

¶ robbed.

§§ good-looking.

‡ clowns.

** chips.

||| begging.

§ hairy hides.

†† bankrupts.

¶¶ vermin.

Get out a horsewhip or a jowler,*
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
An' gar the tatter'd gypsies pack
Wi' a' their bastards on their back!

Go on, my Lord! I lang to meet you,
An' in my "house at hame" to greet you;
Wi' common lords ye shanna mingle,
The benmost neuk † beside the ingle,
At my right han' assigned your seat,
'Tween Herod's hip an' Polycrate;
Or (if you on your station tarrow), ‡
Between Almagro and Pizarro,
A seat, I'm sure ye're weel deservin't;
An' till ye come—your humble servant,

BEELEZEBUB.

June 1st, Anno Mundi 5790.

[This curious production must have been a hasty one, and not much regarded by its author. The only known copy was presented to Mr John Rankine of Adamhill, and through him passed into the hands of a friend who sent it for publication to the editor of the Edinburgh Magazine for February 1818.

M'Kenzie of Applecross is remembered as a liberal-minded, patriotic man, who strove to improve the condition of his tenantry. His views and those of the Highland Society must have been misapprehended by the bard when he put this address into the mouth of "Beelzebub."]

A DREAM.

Thoughts, words, and deeds, the Statute blames with reason;
But surely *Dreams* were ne'er indicted Treason.

On reading, in the public papers, the Laureate's Ode, with the other parade of June 4th, 1786, the Author was no sooner dropt asleep, than he imagined himself transported to the Birth-day Levee: and, in his dreaming fancy, made the following Address:—

GUID-MORNIN to your Majesty!
May Heaven augment your blisses
On ev'ry new birth-day ye see,
A humble poet wishes.

* a bull-dog.

† innermost corner.

‡ take a disrelish.

My bardship here, at your Levee
 O sic a day as this is,
 Is sure an uncouth sight to sec,
 Amang thae birth-day dresses
 Sae fine this day.

I see ye're complimented thrang,
 By mony a lord an' lady ;
 "God save the King"'s a cuckoo sang
 That's unco easy said ay :
 The poets, too, a venal gang,
 Wi' rhymes weel-turn'd an' ready,
 Wad gar * you trow † ye ne'er do wrang,
 But ay unerring steady,
 On sic a day.

For me ! before a monarch's face,
 Ev'n there I winna flatter ;
 For neither pension, post, nor place,
 Am I your humble debtor :
 So, nae reflection on your Grace,
 Your Kingship to bespatter ;
 There's mony waur been o' the race,
 And aiblins ‡ ane been better
 Than you this day.

'Tis very true, my sovereign King,
 My skill may weel be doubted ;
 But facts are chiels that winna ding, §
 An' downa || be disputed :
 Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
 Is e'en right reft ¶ an' clouted,**

* make.
 ‖ cannot.

† believe.
 ¶ riven.

‡ perhaps.
 ** patched

§ be beaten.

And now the third part o' the string,
 An' less, will gang about it
 Than did ae day.¹

Far be 't frae me that I aspire
 To blame your legislation,
 Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire
 To rule this mighty nation :
 But faith ! I muckle doubt, my sire,
 Ye've trusted ministration
 To chaps wha in a barn or byre
 Wad better fill'd their station,
 Than courts yon day.

And now ye've gien auld Britain peace,
 Her broken shins to plaister ;
 Your sair taxation does her fleece,
 Till she has scarce a tester :
 For me, thank God, my life's a lease,
 Nae bargain wearin faster,
 Or faith ! I fear, that, wi' the geese,
 I shortly boost * to pasture
 I' the craft † some day.

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
 When taxes he enlarges,
 (An' Will's a true guid fallow's get, ‡
 A name not envy spairges), §
 That he intends to pay your debt,
 An' lessen a' your charges ;
 But, G—d sake ! let nae saving fit
 Abridge your bonie barges
 An' boats this day.²

* behoved. † common park. ‡ offspring. § disparages.

¹ A reference to the loss of the North American Colonies.

² In the spring of 1786, some discussion arose in parliament about a proposal to give up 64 gun ships, when the navy supplies were being considered.

Adieu, my Liege ! may Freedom geck *
 Beneath your high protection ;
 An' may ye rax † Corruption's neck,
 And gie her for dissection !
 But since I'm here, I'll no neglect,
 In loyal, true affection,
 To pay your Queen, wi' due respect,
 My fealty an' subjection
 This great birth-day.

Hail, Majesty most Excellent !
 While nobles strive to please ye,
 Will ye accept a compliment,
 A simple poet gies ye ?
 Thae bonie bairntime, ‡ Heav'n has lent,
 Still higher may they heeze § ye
 In bliss, till fate some day is sent,
 For ever to release ye
 Frae care that day.

For you, young Potentate o' Wales,
 I tell your Highness fairly,
 Down Pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
 I'm tauld ye're driving rarely ;
 But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
 An' curse your folly sairly,
 That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
 Or rattl'd dice wi' Charlie ||
 By night or day.

Yet aft a ragged cowt's ¶ been known,
 To mak a noble aiver ; **
 So, ye may doucelly fill a throne,
 For a' their clish-ma-claver :

* exult.

|| C. J. Fox.

† stretch.

¶ colt.

‡ brood of children.

** draught-horse.

§ raise.

There, him ¹ at Agincourt wha shone,
 Few better were or braver ;
 And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,²
 He was an unco shaver
 For mony a day.

For you, right rev'rend Osnaburg,³
 Nane sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
 Altho' a ribban at your lug
 Wad been a dress completer :
 As ye disown yon paughty * dog,
 That bears the keys of Peter,
 Then swith ! an' get a wife to hug,
 Or trowth, ye'll stain the mitre
 Some luckless day !

Young, royal "tarry-breeks," I learn,
 Ye've lately come athwart her—
 A glorious galley,⁴ stem and stern,
 Weel rigg'd for Venus' barter ;
 But first hang out that she'll discern
 Your hymeneal charter ;
 Then heave aboard your grapple-airn,
 An', large upon her quarter,
 Come full that day.

Ye, lastly, bonie blossoms a',
 Ye royal lasses dainty,
 Heav'n mak you guid as weel as braw,
 An' gie you lads a-plenty !

* puffed up.

¹ King Henry V.—*R. B.* ² Sir John Falstaff, *vid.* Shakspeare.—*R. B.*

³ Frederick, first a bishop, and afterwards Duke of York.

⁴ Alluding to the newspaper account of a certain Royal sailor's amour.—*R. B.* This was Prince William Henry, afterwards King William IV, who in his youth espoused Mrs Jordan the player.

But sneer na British boys awa !
 For kings are unco scant ay,
 An' German gentles are but sma',
 'They're better just than want ay
 On ony day.

God bless you a' ! consider now,
 Ye're unco muckle dautet ;*
 But ere the course o' life be through,
 It may be bitter sautet :†
 An' I hae seen their coggie fou,‡
 That yet hae tarrow't § at it.
 But or the day was done, I trow,
 The laggen || they hae clautet ¶
 Fu' clean that day.

[Allan Cunningham has observed that "the merits of 'The Dream' are of a high order—the gaiety as well as keenness of the satire, and the vehemence and rapidity of the verse, are not its only attractions. Even the prose introduction is sarcastic; his falling asleep over the Laureate's Ode was a likely consequence, for the birth-day strains of those times were something of the dullest." The poem throughout has been long regarded as prophetic.]

A DEDICATION

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

EXPECT na, sir, in this narration,
 A fleechin,** fleth'rin †† Dedication,
 To roose †† you up, an' ca' you guid,
 An' sprung o' great an' noble bluid,
 Because ye're surnam'd like His Grace—
 Perhaps related to the race :

* petted.	† salted.	‡ dish full.	§ lingered with distaste.
corner of the dish.	¶ scraped.	** begging.	
†† flattering.	‡‡ praise.		

Then, when I'm tir'd—and sae are ye,
Wi' mony a fulsome, sinfu' lie,
Set up a face * how I stop short,
For fear your modesty be hurt.

This may do—maun do, sir, wi' them wha
Maun please the great-folk for a wamefou ;
For me ! sae laigh I need na bow,
For, Lord be thanket, I can plough ;
And when I downa † yoke a naig,
Then, Lord be thanket, I can beg ;
Sae I shall say—an' that's nae flatt'rin —
It's just sic poet an' sic patron.

The Poet, some guid angel help him,
Or else, I fear, some ill ane skelp ‡ him !
He may do weel for a' he's done yet,
But only—he's no just begun yet.

The Patron (sir, ye maun forgie me ;
I winna lie, come what will o' me),
On ev'ry hand it will allow'd be,
He's just—nae better than he shou'd be.

I readily and freely grant,
He downa see a poor man want ;
What's no his ain, he winna tak it ;
What ance he says, he winna break it ;
Ought he can lend he'll no refus't,
Till aft his guidness is abus'd ;
And rascals whyles § that do him wrang,
Ev'n that, he does na mind it lang ;
As master, landlord, husband, father,
He does na fail his part in either.

* pretence.

† cannot.

‡ thrash.

§ occasionally

But then, nae thanks to him for a' that ;
Nae godly symptom ye can ca' that ;
It's naething but a milder feature
Of our poor, sinfu', corrupt nature :
Ye'll get the best o' moral works,
'Mang black Gentoos, and pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi,
Wha never heard of orthodoxy.
That he's the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word and deed,
It's no thro' terror of d-mn-t-n ;
It's just a carnal inclination.

Morality, thou deadly bane,
Thy tens o' thousands thou hast slain !
Vain is his hope, whase stay an' trust is
In moral mercy, truth, and justice !

No—stretch a point to catch a plack ;*
Abuse a brother to his back ;
Steal thro' the winnock † frae a whore,
But point the rake that taks the door ;
Be to the poor like onie whunstane,
And haud their noses to the grunstane ;
Ply ev'ry art o' legal thieving ;
No matter—stick to sound believing.

Learn three-mile pray'rs, an' half-mile graces,
Wi' weel-spread looves, ‡ an' lang, wry faces ;
Grunt up a solemn, lengthen'd groan,
And damn a' parties but your own ;
I'll warrant, then ye're nae deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer.

* farthing.

† window.

‡ hands.

O ye wha leave the springs o' Calvin,
For gumlie * dubs of your ain delvin ! †
Ye sons of Heresy and Error,
Ye'll some day squeel in quaking terror,
When Vengeance draws the sword in wrath,
And in the fire throws the sheath ;
When Ruin, with his sweeping besom,
Just frets till Heav'n commission gies him ;
While o'er the harp pale Misery moans,
And strikes the ever-deep'ning tones,
Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans !

Your pardon, sir, for this digression :
I maist forgot my Dedication ;
But when divinity comes 'cross me,
My readers still are sure to lose me.

So, sir, you see 'twas nae daft vapour ;
But I maturely thought it proper,
When a' my works I did review,
To dedicate them, sir, to you :
Because (ye need na tak' it ill),
I thought them something like yoursel.

Then patronize them wi' your favor,
And your petitioner shall ever ——
I had amaist said, ever pray,
But that's a word I need na say ;
For prayin, I hae little skill o't,
I'm baith dead-sweer, ‡ an' wretched ill o't ;
But I'se repeat each poor man's pray'r,
'That kens or hears about you, sir——

“ May ne'er Misfortune's growling bark,
Howl thro' the dwelling o' the clerk ! §

* muddy.

† digging.

‡ loath.

§ attorney.

May ne'er his gen'rous, honest heart,
For that same gen'rous spirit smart !
May Kennedy's far-honor'd name¹
Lang beet * his hymeneal flame,
Till Hamiltons, at least a dizzen,
Are frae their nuptial labors risen :
Five bonie lasses round their table,
And sev'n braw fellows, stout an' able,
To serve their king an' country weel,
By word, or pen, or pointed steel !
May health and peace, with mutual rays,
Shine on the ev'ning o' his days ;
Till his wee, curlie John's ier-oe,†
When ebbing life nae mair shall flow,
The last, sad, mournful rites bestow !"

I will not wind a lang conclusion,
With complimentary effusion ;
But, whilst your wishes and endeavours
Are blest with Fortune's smiles and favours,
I am, dear sir, with zeal most fervent,
Your much indebted, humble servant.

But if (which Pow'rs above prevent)
That iron-hearted carl, Want,
Attended, in his grim advances,
By sad mistakes, and black mischances,
While hopes, and joys, and pleasures fly him,
Make you as poor a dog as I am,
Your 'humble servant' then no more ;
For who would humbly serve the poor ?
But, by a poor man's hopes in Heav'n !
While recollection's pow'r is giv'n—

* fan.

† great-grandchild.

¹ Mr Hamilton's wife belonged to an ancient and influential family of that name, in Carrick.

If, in the vale of humble life,
 The victim sad of fortune's strife,
 I, thro' the tender-gushing tear,
 Should recognise my master dear ;
 If friendless, low, we meet together,
 Then, sir, your hand—my friend and brother !

[The gentleman to whom this characteristic effusion is addressed was, in every respect, a man after Burns' own heart ; and this fact is very quaintly told in the passage where he explains his reason for dedicating the poems to Hamilton :—

“ Because—ye needna tak it ill—
 I thought them something like yoursel.”

According to Mr Lockhart, “ Hamilton's family, though professedly adhering to the Presbyterian Establishment, had always lain under a strong suspicion of Episcopalianism. Gavin's grandfather had been curate of Arkoswald in the troublous times that preceded the Revolution, and incurred popular hatred in consequence of being supposed to have been instrumental in bringing a thousand of the ‘ Highland host ’ into that region in 1677.” We rather suspect this was the *great-grandfather* of the poet's end, named Claud, who died in 1699, and whose son *John* was a writer in Edinburgh.

Gavin's father was also a writer in Mauchline, inhabiting the old castellated mansion which still exists near the church. Cromek mentions that the Rev. William Auld had quarrelled with the senior Hamilton, and sought every occasion of revenging himself on the son. Be that as it may, our previous notes sufficiently narrate the annoyances to which Gavin was subjected by the Kirk Session ; and the author's text there, and elsewhere, shows the measure of reprisal that followed.]

VERSIFIED NOTE TO DR MACKENZIE, MAUCLINE.

FRIDAY first's the day appointed
 By the Right Worshipful anointed,
 To hold our grand procession ;
 To get a blad o' Johnie's morals,
 And taste a swatch * o' Manson's barrels
 I' the way of our profession.

The Master and the Brotherhood
 Would a' be glad to see you ;
 For me I wad be mair than proud
 To share the mercies wi' you.
 If Death, then, wi' skaith,* then,
 Some mortal heart is hechtin,†
 Inform him, and storm ‡ him,
 That Saturday you'll fecht him.

ROBERT BURNS.

Mossgiel, An. M. 5790.

[The masonic date appended to the foregoing rhyme signifies A. D. 1786. Our notes hitherto have had little occasion to refer to the poet's passion for Free-masonry. He had, in July 1784, been raised to the position of Depute Master of St James' Lodge, Tarbolton, from which period down to May 1788, he continued frequently to sign the minutes in that capacity. On 24th June 1786, being St John's Day, a grand procession of the lodge took place by previous arrangement, and the lines forming the text shew the style in which he invited his brother-mason, Dr Mackenzie, to be present on the occasion. The Lodge held its meetings in a back-room of the principal inn of the village kept by a person named Manson. It is not very clear who was the "Johnie" thus expected to dilate on morals. Professor Walker tells us it was John Mackenzie himself, whose favourite topic was "the origin of Morals."]

THE FAREWELL.

TO THE BRETHREN OF ST JAMES'S LODGE, TARBOLTON.

Tune—"Goodnight, and joy be wi' you a'."

ADIEU ! a heart-warm, fond adieu ;
 Dear brothers of the *mystic tye* !
 Ye favoured, *enlighten'd* few,
 Companions of my social joy ;
 Tho' I to foreign lands must hie,
 Pursuing Fortune's slidd'ry ba' ;

* harm.

† threatening.

‡ bully.

With melting heart, and brimful eye,
I'll mind you still, tho' far awa.

Oft have I met your social band,
And spent the cheerful, festive night :
Oft, honour'd with supreme command,
Presided o'er the *sons of light* :
And by that *hieroglyphic* bright,
Which none but *Craftsmen* ever saw !
Strong Mem'ry on my heart shall write
Those happy scenes, when far awa.

May Freedom, Harmony, and Love,
Unite you in the *grand Design*,
Beneath th' Omniscient Eye above—
The glorious *Architect* Divine,
That you may keep th' *unerring line*,
Still rising by the *plummet's law*,
Till *Order* bright completely shine,
Shall be my pray'r when far awa.

And *you*, farewell ! whose merits claim
Justly that *highest badge* to wear :
Heav'n bless your honour'd, noble name,
To *Masonry* and *Scotia* dear !
A last request permit me here,—
When yearly ye assemble a',
One *round*, I ask it with a *tear*,
To him, *the Bard that's far awa*.

[The minute-book of the lodge shews that on 23rd June 1786, the poet was present at a meeting preparatory to the grand procession referred to in the last piece. He was then full of the intention of sailing before the close of August ; for we find him writing to a friend on 30th July :—

"My hour is now come : you and I shall never meet in Britain more. I have orders, within three weeks at furthest, to repair aboard the *Nancy*, Captain Smith, from Clyde to Jamaica."

It would appear that Captain James Montgomery (a younger brother of Col. Hugh Montgomery of Coilsfield) was, about this period, Grandmaster

Wha can do nought but fyke an' fumble,
 'Twad been nae plea ;
 But he was gleg as onie wumble,*
 That's owre the sea !

Auld, cantie Kyle may weepers † wear,
 An' stain them wi' the saut, saut tear :
 'Twill mak her poor auld heart, I fear,
 In flinders ‡ flee :
 He was her Laureat monie a year,
 That's owre the sea !

He saw Misfortune's cauld nor-west
 Lang mustering up a bitter blast ;
 A jillet § brak his heart at last,
 Ill may she be !
 So, took a berth afore the mast,
 An' owre the sea.

To tremble under Fortune's cummock, ||
 On scarce a bellyfu' o' drummock, ¶
 Wi' his proud, independent stomach,
 Could ill agree ;
 So, row't his hurdies ** in a hammock,
 An' owre the sea.

He ne'er was gien to great misguidin,
 Yet coin his pouches wad na bide in ;
 Wi' him it ne'er was under hidin ;
 He dealt it free :
 The Muse was a' that he took pride in,
 That's owre the sea.

Jamaica bodies, use him weel,
 An' hap him in a cozie biel : ††

 joiner's gimlet.

fragments.

posteriors.

† a stripe of white muslin on the cuffs of mourners.

§ jilt.

|| cudgel.

¶ meal and water mixed.

†† comfortable shelter.

Ye'll find him ay a dainty chiel,
 An' fou o' glec :
 He wad na wrang'd the vera deil,
 That's owre the sea.

Fareweel, my rhyme-composing billie !
 Your native soil was right ill-willie ;
 But may ye flourish like a lily,
 Now bonilie !
 I'll toast you in my hindmost gillie,*
 Tho' owre the sea !

[This playful ode shines out cheerfully among the poet's more pathetic leave-takings of the period. He puts it into the mouth of an imaginary "rhyme-composing brother ;" but not one of the tribe, except the bard Kyle himself, could have produced such an original and happy strain. His own picture is painted to the life, in all his "ranting, roving Robi hood ;" and yet, amid his rollicking, he throws in a touch of the truly pathetic, just to show his reader how

" Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure,
 Thrill the deepest notes of woe."]

SONG.—FAREWELL TO ELIZA.

Tune—"Gilderoy."

FROM thee, Eliza, I must go,
 And from my native shore ;
 The cruel fates between us throw
 A boundless ocean's roar :
 But boundless oceans, roaring wide,
 Between my love and me,
 They never, never can divide
 My heart and soul from thee.

Farewell, farewell, Eliza dear,
 The maid that I adore !

* gill of whisky.

A boding voice is in mine ear,
 We part to meet no more !
 But the latest throb that leaves my heart,
 While Death stands victor by,—
 That throb, Eliza, is thy part,
 And thine that latest sigh !

[In the Ode on a Scotch Bard, the author took a general farewell of the bonie lasses—widows, wives an' a'," and here he singles out one in particular, from among "the belles of Mauchline," in whom he seems to have a more special interest. That he really had some of "his random fits daffin" with a young woman bearing this Christian name, is evident from a few words that dropped from him after his "eclatant return" from Linlithburgh to Mauchline.

On 11th June 1787, in a letter to his friend James Smith, then at Linlithgow, he says—"Your mother, sister, and brother; my quondam Eliza, &c., are all well." Chambers, from a variety of circumstances, came to the conclusion that this "Eliza" was the "braw Miss Betty" of the "six proper young belles," so distinguished by the poet in his canzonette. She was sister to Miss Helen Miller, the wife of Dr Mackenzie, and died shortly after being married to a Mr Templeton.]

A BARD'S EPITAPH.

Is there a whim-inspired fool,
 Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
 Owre blate* to seek, owre proud to snool,†
 Let him draw near ;
 And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
 And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song,
 Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
 That weekly this area throng,
 O, pass not by !
 But, with a frater-feeling strong,
 Here, heave a sigh.

* bashful.

† submit tamely.

Is there a man, whose judgment clear
 Can others teach the course to steer,
 Yet runs, himself, life's mad career,
 Wild as the wave,
 Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear,
 Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below
 Was quick to learn and wise to know,
 And keenly felt the friendly glow,
 And softer flame ;
 But thoughtless follies laid him low,
 And stain'd his name !

Reader, attend ! whether thy soul
 Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
 Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
 In low pursuit ;
 Know, prudent, cautious, self-control
 Is wisdom's root.

[The poet's labours to make up a volume of moderate thickness were drawing to a close; and, having bade farewell to "friends and foes," he had only now to compose his own Epitaph. The Elegy on himself, given previously, did not altogether satisfy him; so he tasked his muse, and produced what, with common consent, is allowed to be equally truthful, pathetic, and sublime.]

EPITAPH FOR ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.

KNOW thou, O stranger to the fame
 Of this much lov'd, much honoured name !
 (For none that knew him need be told)
 A warmer heart death ne'er made cold.

[Mr Aiken was the "orator Bob" of the ecclesiastical courts, in the proceedings against Gavin Hamilton, and against Dr M'Gill. To the gentleman, who was a life-long friend of the bard from the date of their first acquaintance, the "Cottar's Saturday Night" is dedicated. He survived the poet, till 24th March 1807.]

EPITAPH FOR GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

THE poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
 Whom canting wretches blam'd ;
 But with such as he, where'er he be,
 May I be sav'd or d—d !

[Mr Hamilton, of whom we have already had occasion to say a good deal, survived till 8th Feb. 1805, dying at the comparatively early age of fifty-two.]

EPITAPH ON "WEE JOHNNIE."

Hic Jacet wee Johnnie.

Whoe'er thou art, O reader, know
 That Death has murder'd Johnnie ;
 An' here his *body* lies fu' low ;
 For *saul* he ne'er had ony.

[These four lines have been tacitly understood as a satire—not a very wicked one—on his printer. The decent little typographer, however, was not a whit the worse of setting up in type his own "Hic Jacet." He prospered in the world, and died at Ayr on 6th May 1821.]

THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE.

Tune—"Ettrick Banks."

"T'WAS even—the dewy fields were green,
 On every blade the pearls hang ;¹
 The zephyr wanton'd round the bean,
 And bore its fragrant sweets along :
 In ev'ry glen the mavis sang,
 All nature list'ning seem'd the while,
 Except where greenwood echoes rang,
 Among the braes o' Ballochmyle.

¹ "Hang," a common Scotticism for *hung*.

With careless step I onward stray'd,
My heart rejoic'd in nature's joy,
When, musing in a lonely glade,
A maiden fair I chanc'd to spy :
Her look was like the morning's eye,
Her air like nature's vernal smile ;
Perfection whisper'd, passing by,
" Behold the lass o' Ballochmyle !"

Fair is the morn in flowery May,
And sweet is night in autumn mild ;
When roving thro' the garden gay,
Or wand'ring in the lonely wild :
But woman, nature's darling child !
There all her charms she does compile ;
Even there her other works are foil'd
By the bonie lass o' Ballochmyle.

O had she been a country maid,
And I the happy country swain,
Tho' shelter'd in the lowest shed
That ever rose on Scotland's plain !
Thro' weary winter's wind and rain,
With joy, with rapture, I would toil ;
And nightly to my bosom strain
The bonie lass o' Ballochmyle.

Then pride might climb the slipp'ry steep,
Where fame and honors lofty shine ;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine :
Give me the cot below the pine,
To tend the flocks or till the soil ;
And ev'ry day have joys divine
With the bonie lass o' Ballochmyle.

[According to the poet's own information, on a lovely evening in July 1786, the muse suggested this famous lyric. Strolling on the banks of Ayr

Ballochmyle, while his "heart rejoiced in nature's joy," animation was added to the scene by the unexpected approach of Miss Williamina Alexander, the sister of the new proprietor of that estate; and although she only crossed his path like a vision, the above verses were the result of that incident.

In a warmly-composed letter, he enclosed the song to the lady; referring with much animation to the occasion which gave it birth. His professed object in addressing the lady was to obtain her consent to the printing of the song in the new edition. It would appear, however, that Miss Alexander judged it prudent not to reply to the poet's request. But a day or two arrived when she was proud to exhibit the letter and the poem together. That interesting production now hangs on the wall of the "spence" or back-parlour of the farm of Mossgiel, the place selected about twenty years ago, by the relatives of the heroine of the song, as the fittest for its exhibition to "all and sundries."

We have only to add that the "Bonie Lass" herself died unmarried in 1843, aged 88.]

MOTTO PREFIXED TO THE AUTHOR'S FIRST PUBLICATION.

THE simple Bard, unbroke by rules of art,
He pours the wild effusions of the heart;
And if inspir'd, 'tis Nature's pow'rs inspire;
Her's all the melting thrill, and her's the kindling fire.

[The famous Kilmarnock volume of Burns, with the above motto on its title-page, was issued on the 30th July 1786.]

LINES TO MR JOHN KENNEDY.

FAREWELL, dear friend! may gude luck hit you,
And 'mang her favourites admit you:
If e'er Detraction shore* to smit you,
May nane believe him,
And ony deil that thinks to get you,
Good Lord, deceive him!

[The above forms the concluding part of a letter to the same friend to whom he addressed a former poetical epistle.]

* offer.

LINES TO AN OLD SWEETHEART.

ONCE fondly lov'd, and still remember'd dear,
 Sweet early object of my youthful vows,
 Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,
 Friendship ! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

And when you read the simple artless rhymes,
 One friendly sigh for him—he asks no more,
 Who, distant, burns in flaming torrid climes,
 Or haply lies beneath th' Atlantic roar.

[In his MS. collection made for Captain Riddell, we find the following heading and note attached :—"Written on the blank leaf of a copy of the first edition of my Poems, which I presented to an old sweetheart, then married.—'Twas the girl I mentioned in my letter to Dr Moore, where I speak of taking the sun's altitude. Poor Peggy ! Her husband is my old acquaintance, and a most worthy fellow When I was taking leave of my Carrick relations, intending to go to the West Indies, when I took farewell of her, neither she nor I could speak a syllable. Her husband escorted me three miles on my road, and we both parted with tears."]

LINES WRITTEN ON A BANK-NOTE.

WAE worth thy power, thou cursed leaf,
 Fell source o' a' my woe and grief ;
 For lack o' thee I've lost my lass,
 For lack o' thee I scrimp my glass :
 I see the children of affliction
 Unaided, through thy curst restriction :
 I've seen the oppressor's cruel smile
 Amid his hapless victim's spoil ;
 And for thy potence vainly wished,
 To crush the villain in the dust :
 For lack o' thee, I leave this much-lov'd shore,
 Never, perhaps, to greet old Scotland more.

KYLE.

R. B.

[The note is for one pound of the Bank of Scotland's issue, 1st March 1780. Internal evidence shows the lines were written about August 1786.]

STANZAS ON NAETHING.

EXTEMPORE EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

To you, sir, this summons I've sent,
Pray, whip till the pownie is fraething ;^{*}
But if you demand what I want,
I honestly answer you—naething.

Ne'er scorn a poor Poet like me,
For idly just living and breathing,
While people of every degree
Are busy employed about—naething.

Poor Centum-per-centum may fast,
And grumble his hurdies † their claithing,
He'll find, when the balance is cast,
He's gane to the devil for—naething.

The courtier cringes and bows,
Ambition has likewise its plaything ;
A coronet beams on his brows ;
And what is a coronet ?—naething.

Some quarrel the Presbyter gown,
Some quarrel Episcopal graithing ;[‡]
But every good fellow will own
The quarrel is a' about—naething.

The lover may sparkle and glow,
Approaching his bonie bit gay thing ;
But marriage will soon let him know
He's gotten—a buskit up naething.

* frothing.

† posteriors.

‡ vestments

The Poet may jingle and rhyme,
In hopes of a laureate wreathing,
And when he has wasted his time,
He's kindly rewarded wi'—naething.

The thundering bully may rage,
And swagger and swear like a heathen ;
But collar him fast, I'll engage,
You'll find that his courage is—naething.

Last night wi' a feminine whig—
A poet she couldna put faith in ;
But soon we grew lovingly big,
I taught her, her terrors were naething.

Her whigship was wonderful pleased,
But charmingly tickled wi' ae thing ;
Her fingers I lovingly squeezed,
And kissed her, and promised her—naething.

The priest anathèmas may threat—
Predicament, sir, that we're baith in ;
But when honor's reveillé is beat,
The holy artillery's naething.

And now I must mount on the wave—
My voyage perhaps there is death in ;
But what is a watery grave ?
The drowning a Poet is naething.

And now, as grim death's in my thought,
To you, sir, I make this bequeathing ;
My service as long as ye've ought,
And my friendship, by God, when ye've naething.

[This piece is supposed to have been presented by Burns to Mrs Dunlop some time in the year 1788. The last stanza, together with the one immediately preceding, fixes the date of this characteristic effusion as about August 1786.]

THE FAREWELL.

The valiant, in himself, what can he suffer?
 Or what does he regard his single woes?
 But when, alas! he multiplies himself,
 To dearer selves, to the lov'd tender fair,
 To those whose bliss, whose beings hang upon him,
 To helpless children,—then, Oh then he feels
 The point of misery festering in his heart,
 And weakly weeps his fortunes like a coward:
 Such, such am I!—undone!

THOMSON'S *Edward and Elcanora*.

FAREWELL, old Scotia's bleak domains,
 Far dearer than the torrid plains,
 Where rich ananas blow!
 Farewell, a mother's blessing dear!
 A brother's sigh! a sister's tear!
 My Jean's heart-rending throe!
 Farewell, my Bess! tho' thou'rt bereft
 Of my paternal care,
 A faithful brother I have left,
 My part in him thou'lt share!
 Adieu, too, to you too,
 My Smith, my bosom frien';
 When kindly you mind me,
 O then befriend my Jean!

What bursting anguish tears my heart;
 From thee, my Jeany, must I part!
 Thou, weeping, answ'rest—'No!'
 Alas! misfortune stares my face,
 And points to ruin and disgrace,
 I for thy sake must go!
 Thee, Hamilton, and Aiken dear,
 A grateful, warm adieu:

I, with a much-indebted tear,
 Shall still remember you !
 All hail then, the gale then,
 Wafts me from thee, dear shore !
 It rustles, and whistles
 I'll never see thee more !

[The author's painful anticipation of "Jean's heart-rending throe" in this effusion, seems to prove that it was composed prior to 3rd September 1786, at which date she was delivered of twins, a boy and a girl. It is observable in the poet's correspondence and other productions after that event, that he seems less disposed to carry out his resolution to go abroad. The admiration everywhere expressed for the lately published poems, began to throw a lustre on the name of Burns, and to point his way to a better fate than exile in a torrid clime. The birth of these children, and the improved prospects of the bard, inclined old Mr Armour to come to honourable terms with him. It was agreed that the Mossgiel family should adopt the boy, while Jean herself took charge of the girl, thus dividing the burden of maintenance on both parties equally.]

THE CALF.

To the Rev. JAMES STEVEN, on his text, MALACHI, ch. iv. vers. 2.
 "And ye shall go forth, and grow up, as CALVES of the stall."

RIGHT, sir ! your text I'll prove it true,
 Tho' heretics may laugh ;
 For instance, there's yoursel just now,
 God knows, an unco *calf*.

And should some patron be so kind,
 As bless you wi' a kirk,
 I doubt na, sir, but then we'll find.
 Ye're still as great a *stirk*.

But, if the lover's raptur'd hour,
 Shall ever be your lot,
 Forbid it, ev'ry heavenly Power,
 You e'er should be a *stol* !

Tho', when some kind connubial dear
 Your but-an'-ben adorns,
 The like has been that—you may wear
 A noble head of *horns*.

And, in your lug, most reverend James,
 To hear you roar and rowte,
 Few men o' sense will doubt your claims
 To rank among the *nowte*.

And when ye're number'd wi' the dead,
 Below a grassy hillock,
 With justice they may mark your head—
 "Here lies a famous *bullock*!"

[The eventful Sunday, 3d September 1786, which produced the poet's *Yins* towards evening, brought forth this effusion at the morning service in *Lauchline kirk*. Burns had called upon Mr Gavin Hamilton in his way *ither*, expecting his friend might be going there too. Mr Hamilton declined going, but requested the poet to bring him a note of the discourse not fewer than four stanzas of rhyme. A bet was made between them on this point, and accordingly Burns presented four of the above verses to Hamilton immediately after forenoon service. Dr Mackenzie happened to look in at Mr Hamilton's at the same time, and was so tickled with the performance that he extracted from the poet a promise of a copy, which reached him on the evening of same day.

The Rev. James Steven, a native of Kilmarnock, was at this time the young assistant of the Rev. Robert Dow, of Ardrossan. In 1787 he was called to London (Crown Court Chapel), and in 1803 was presented to the archiepiscopal charge of Kilwinning. He obtained the degree of D.D., and died of apoplexy in 1817.]

NATURE'S LAW—A POEM.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

"Great Nature spoke; observant man obey'd."—POPE.

LET other heroes boast their scars,
 The marks of sturt and strife;
 And other poets sing of wars,
 The plagues of human life;

Shame fa' the fun ; wi' sword and gun
To slap mankind like lumber !
I sing his name, and nobler fame,
Wha multiplies our number.

Great Nature spoke, with air benign,
"Go on, ye human race ;
This lower world I you resign ;
Be fruitful and increase.
The liquid fire of strong desire
I've pour'd it in each bosom ;
Here, on this hand, does Mankind stand,
And there, is Beauty's blossom."

The Hero of these artless strains,
A lowly bard was he,
Who sung his rhymes in Coila's plains,
With meikle mirth an' glee ;
Kind Nature's care had given his share
Large, of the flaming current ;
And, all devout, he never sought
To stem the sacred torrent.

He felt the powerful, high behest
Thrill, vital, thro' and thro' ;
And sought a correspondent breast,
To give obedience due :
Propitious Powers screen'd the young flow'rs,
From mildews of abortion ;
And lo ! the bard—a great reward—
Has got a double portion !

Auld cantie Coil may count the day,
As annual it returns,
The third of Libra's equal sway,
That gave another Burns,

With future rhymes, an' other times,
 To emulate his sire ;
 To sing auld Coil in nobler style,
 With more poetic fire.

Ye Powers of peace, and peaceful song,
 Look down with gracious eyes ;
 And bless auld Coila, large and long,
 With multiplying joys ;
 Lang may she stand to prop the land,
 The flow'r of ancient nations ;
 And Burnses spring, her fame to sing,
 To endless generations !

[This characteristic effusion reminds us of the epigram the poet afterwards inscribed on a window-pane of the Globe Tavern, Dumfries :—

“The Deities that I adore
 Are social Peace and Plenty !
 I'm better pleased to make one more,
 Than be the death of twenty.”

The reference, in the last stanza but one, is to Robert Burns, junior, who, born on 3rd September 1786, died at Dumfries, 14th May 1857, in his 71st year. He was a man of solid acquirements, but without any “poetic fire.”]

SONG—WILLIE CHALMERS.

Mr Chalmers, a gentleman in Ayrshire, a particular friend of mine, asked me to write a poetic epistle to a young lady, his Dulcinea. I had seen her, but was scarcely acquainted with her, and wrote as follows :—

Wi' braw new branks * in mickle pride,
 And eke a braw new brechan,†
 My Pegasus I'm got astride,
 And up Parnassus pechin ; ‡

* horse-curbing gear.
 I.

† horse-collar.
 S

‡ breathing hard.

Whiles owre a bush wi' downward crush,
The doited * beastie stammers ;
Then up he gets, and off he sets,
For sake o' Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na, lass, that weel kenn'd name
May cost a pair o' blushes ;
I am nae stranger to your fame,
Nor his warm urgèd wishes.
Your bonie face, sae mild and sweet,
His honest heart enamours,
And faith ye'll no be lost a whit,
Tho' wair'd † on Willie Chalmers.

Auld Truth hersel might swear ye're fair,
And Honour safely back her ;
And Modesty assume your air,
And ne'er a ane mistak her :
And sic twa love-inspiring een
Might fire even holy palmers ;
Nae wonder then they've fatal been
To honest Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na fortune may you shore ‡
Some mim-mou'd § pouter'd priestie,
Fu' lifted up wi' Hebrew lore,
And band upon his breastie :
But oh ! what signifies to you
His lexicons and grammars ;
The feeling heart's the royal blue,
And that's wi' Willie Chalmers.

Some gapin', glowrin countra laird
May warsle || for your favour ;

* stupid.

§ affectedly modest.

† spent.

|| strive.

‡ proffer.

May claw his lug, and straik his beard,
 And hoast * up some palaver : †
 My bonie maid, before ye wed
 Sic clumsy-witted hammers,
 Seek Heaven for help, and barefit skelp ‡
 Awa wi' Willie Chalmers.

Forgive the Bard ! my fond regard
 For ane that shares my bosom,
 Inspires my Muse to gie 'm his dues,
 For deil a hair I roose § him.
 May powers aboon unite you soon,
 And fructify your amours,
 And every year come in mair dear
 To you and Willie Chalmers.

[“Willie Chalmers” was a writer and notary public in Ayr, who executed the notarial intimation of the poet's assignation in favour of Gilbert Burns, on 24th July 1786. He was also employed under a mock mandate, dated 20th November thereafter, to superintend the public burning of a certain “nefarious, abominable, and wicked song or ballad” enclosed to him by Burns, just before leaving Ayrshire for Edinburgh.]

REPLY TO A TRIMMING EPISTLE RECEIVED FROM A TAILOR.

WHAT ails ye now, ye lousie b—h,
 To thresh my back at sic a pitch ?
 Losh, man ! hae mercy wi' your natch,
 Your bodkin's bauld ;
 I didna suffer half sae much
 Frae Daddie Auld.

What tho' at times, when I grow crouse,
 I gie their wames a random pouce,

* cough.

† nonsensical speech.

‡ spring.

§ flatter

Is that enough for you to souse
Your servant sae?
Gae mind your seam, ye prick-the-louse,
An' jag-the-flea!

King David, o' poetic brief,
Wrocht 'mang the lasses sic mischief
As fill'd his after-life wi' grief,
An' bluidy rants,
An' yet he's rank'd amang the chief
O' lang-syne saunts.

And maybe, Tam, for a' my cants,
My wicked rhymes, an' drucken rants,
I'll gie auld cloven Cloutie's haunts
An unco slip yet,
An' snugly sit amang the saunts,
At Davie's hip yet!

But, fegs! the Session says I maun
Gae fa' upo' anither plan
Than garrin lasses coup the cran,
Clean heels owre body,
An' sairly thole their mother's ban
Afore the howdy.

This leads me on to tell for sport,
How I did wi' the Session sort;
Auld Clinkum, at the inner port,
Cried three times, "Robin!
Come hither lad, and answer for't,
Ye're blam'd for jobbin!"

Wi' pinch I put a Sunday's face on,
An' snoov'd awa' before the Session:
I made an open, fair confession—
I scorn'd to lee,

An' syne Mess John, beyond expression,
Fell foul o' me.

A fornicator-lown he call'd me,
An' said my faut frae bliss expell'd me ;
I own'd the tale was true he tell'd me,
"But, what the matter ?
(Quo' I) I fear unless ye geld me,
I'll ne'er be better !"

"Geld you ! (quo' he) an' what for no ?
If that your right hand, leg, or toe
Should ever prove your spiritual foe,
You should remember
To cut it aff—an' what for no?—
Your dearest member !"

"Na, na, (quo' I,) I'm no for that,
Gelding's nae better than 'tis ca't ;
I'd rather suffer for my faut,
A hearty flewit,
As sair owre hip as ye can draw't,
Tho' I should rue it."

"Or, gin ye like to end the bother,
To please us a'—I've just ae ither—
When next wi' yon lass I forgather,
Whate'er betide it,
I'll frankly gie her 't a' thegither,
An' let her guide it."

But, sir, this pleas'd them warst of a',
An' therefore, Tam, when that I saw,
I said "Gude night," an' cam' awa',
An' left the Session ;

I saw they were resolvèd a'
On my oppression.

[The person to whom this poem is addressed was Thomas Walker, a tailor resident at Pool, near the village of Ochiltree. He was rather an eccentric character, and could string rhymes together fluently. Here is a sample taken from Tom's own MS. collection :—

“ Had I a night o' thee or twa,
An' guid tobacco for to blaw,
Atho' it was baith frost and snaw,
I wadna weary ;
The crack thou could sae brawly ca',
An' keep me cheery.

Or could we meet some Mauchline Fair—
I sometimes tak a bottle there—
Thou'd be as welcome to a share
As thou could'st be ;
Wae worth the purse that wadna spare
A drink to thee !

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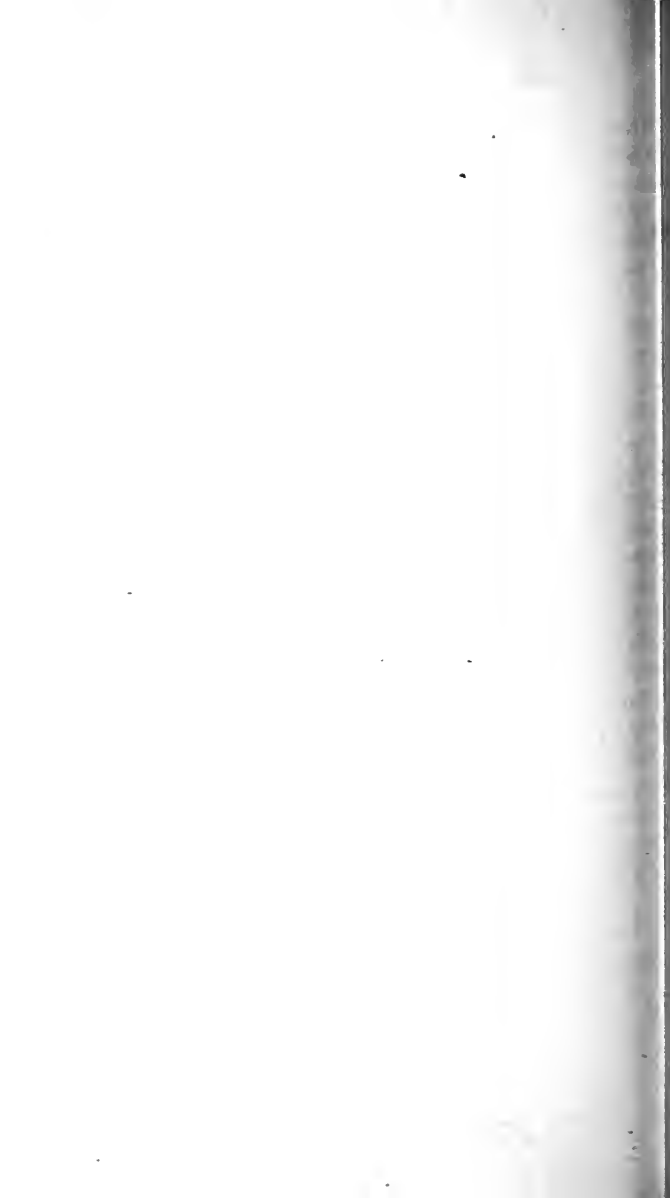
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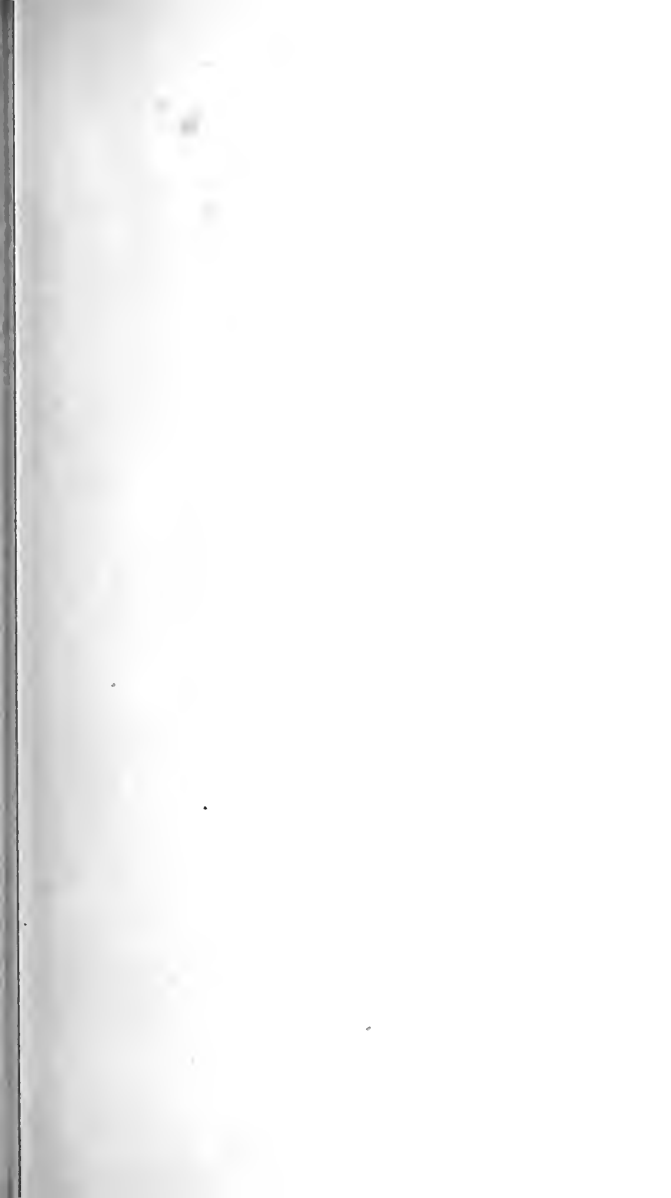




EDINBURGH ILLUSTRATED EDITION OF THE
POEMS AND SONGS OF ROBERT BURNS
COMPLETE · CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED
NOTES, GLOSSARIES, AND INDEX BY W. SCOTT
DUGLAS · AND LIFE BY PROFESSOR NICHOL ·
WITH TWELVE PHOTOGRAVURES AFTER
DRAWINGS BY MARSHALL BROWN · IN
FOUR VOLUMES









it is not until I see the "Lion" P

ROBERT BURNS

POEMS AND
SONGS COMPLETE

VOLUME
SECOND



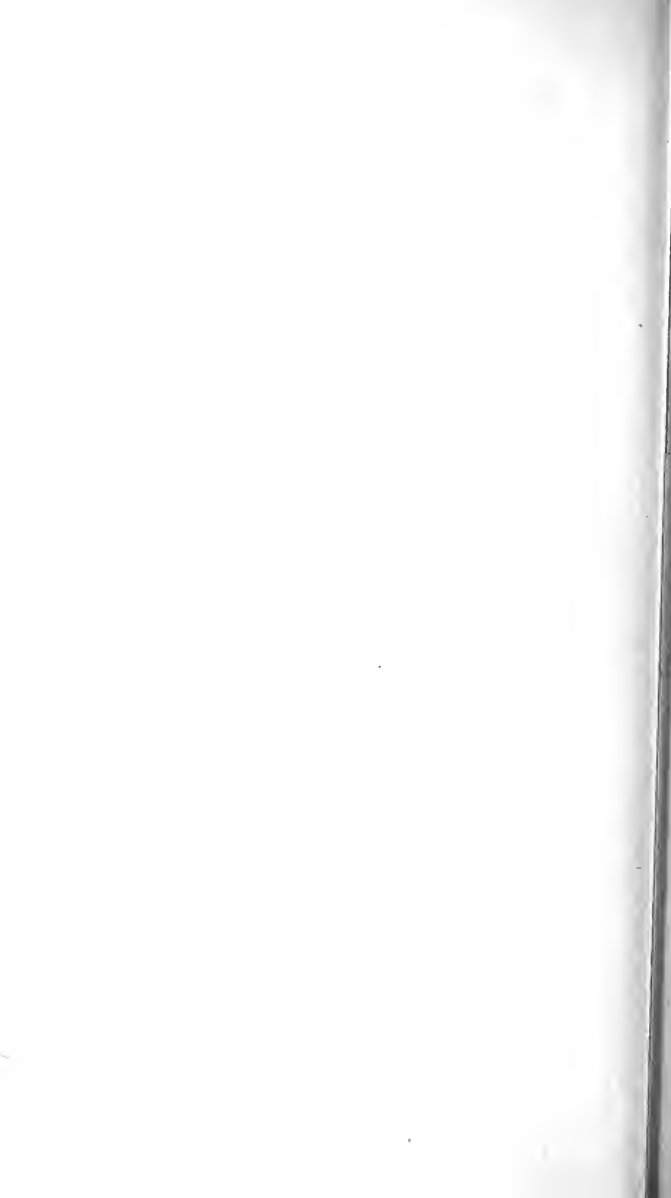
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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

BUT WHAT WILL I DO WI' TAM GLEN	<i>Frontispiece</i>
AULD LANG SYNE	<i>Face page 130</i>
TAM O' SHANTER 234



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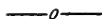
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POEMS AND SONGS.



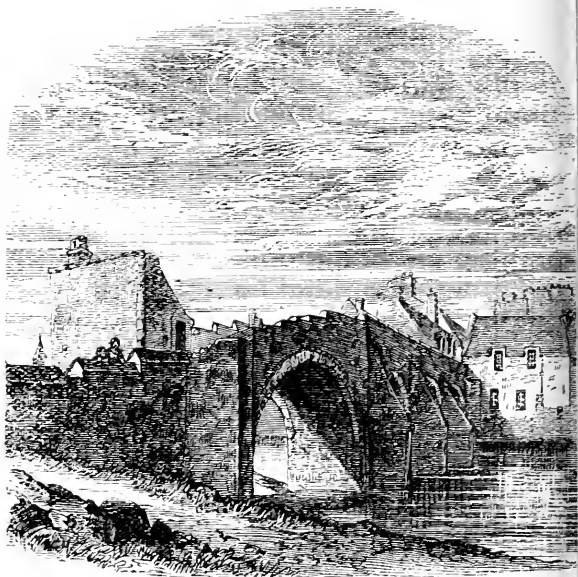
INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

"The Poetic Genius of my country . . . whispered me to come to this ancient metropolis of Caledonia, and lay my songs under your honoured protection."—*Dedication to the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt.*

The contents of the preceding volume brought the reader down to about the close of September 1786. On the third day of that month, Jean Armour's safe delivery of twin-children, and the happy domestic arrangement that followed, caused matters to flow more smoothly with the forlorn poet. On the following day, the venerable Dr Blacklock of Edinburgh, who was the centre of a literary circle in that city, wrote to his friend, the Rev. Dr Lawrie, parish minister of Loudoun, a letter which is supposed to have had considerable effect on the after career of Burns. Its subject was the wonderful volume of poetry that had issued from the Kilmarnock Press about five weeks previously. That letter concluded with an expression of the writer's regret that although another copy of Burns's poems had been "sought with diligence and ardour," it could not be procured because the whole impression was exhausted. "It were therefore," he added, "much to be wished, for the sake of the young man, that a second edition more numerous than the former could immediately be printed."

Burns at the date we speak of (Sept. 4th, 1786), had no personal acquaintance with Dr Lawrie, who, on receipt of Blacklock's letter, appears to have made no immediate movement in the poet's behalf. After the lapse of a week or two, however, he forwarded the communication to Mr Gavin Hamilton, who placed it in the poet's hands. Burns's own account of this transaction forms the concluding portion of his very condensed narrative in the famous autobiographical letter to Dr Moore. After stating his deplorable condition at the close of July and during a great part of August, "skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail," he says, "I had taken the last farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed a song—'The gloomy night is gathering fast,' which was to be the last effort of my muse in Caledonia, when a letter from Dr Blacklock to a friend of mine, overthrew all my schemes by rousing my poetic ambition. The Doctor belonged to a class of critics for whose

applause I had not even dared to hope. His idea that I would meet with every encouragement for a second edition, fired me so much, that away I posted to Edinburgh without a single acquaintance in town, or a single letter of recommendation in my pocket."



THE BRIGS OF AYR :

A POEM.

Inscribed to JOHN BALLANTINE, Esq., Ayr.

THE simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from ev'ry bough ;
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush ;

he soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,
 r deep-ton'd plovers grey, wild-whistling o'er the hill ;
 hall he—nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
 o hardy independence bravely bred,
 y early poverty to hardship steel'd,
 nd train'd to arms in stern Misfortune's field—
 hall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
 he servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes ?
 r labour hard the panegyric close,
 ith all the venal soul of dedicating prose ?
 o ! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
 nd throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
 e glows with all the spirit of the Bard,
 ame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward.
 ill, if some patron's gen'rous care he trace,
 kill'd in the secret to bestow with grace ;
 hen Ballantine befriends his humble name,
 nd hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
 ith heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells,
 he godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter hap,*
 nd thack and rape † secure the toil-won crap ;
 otatoe bings ‡ are snuggèd up frae skaith §
 ' coming Winter's biting, frosty breath ;
 he bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
 nnumber'd buds an' flow'rs' delicious spoils,
 eal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
 re doom'd by Man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
 he death o' devils, smoor'd || wi' brimstone reek :
 he thundering guns are heard on ev'ry side,
 he wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide ;
 he feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,

* covering.

† thatch and straw-rope.

‡ heaps.

§ harr

|| smothered.

Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie :
 (What warm, poetic heart but inly bleeds,
 And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds !)
 Nae mair the flow'r in field or meadow springs
 Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
 Except perhaps the Robin's whistling glee,
 Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree :
 The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
 Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noontide blaze,
 While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays.

'Twas in that season, when a simple Bard,
 Unknown and poor—simplicity's reward !—
 Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
 By whim inspir'd, or haply prest wi' care,
 He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
 And down by *Simpson's*¹ wheel'd the left about :
 (Whether impell'd by all-directing Fate,
 To witness what I after shall narrate ;
 Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
 He wander'd out, he knew not where nor why :)
 The drowsy Dungeon-clock² had number'd two,
 And Wallace Tower² had sworn the fact was true :
 The tide-swoln firth, with sullen-sounding roar,
 Through the still night dash'd hoarse along the shore
 All else was hush'd as Nature's closèd e'e ;
 The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree ;
 The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
 Crept, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering stream—

When, lo ! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
 The clanging sugh * of whistling wings is heard ;

* rushing sound.

¹ A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end.—*R. B.*

² The two steeples.—*R. B.* The first was connected with the Old il, now removed, and the other was an antique erection in the High St, now replaced by an elegant tower so named.

Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
 swift as the gos¹ drives on the wheeling hare ;
 One on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
 Theither flutters o'er the rising piers :
 Our warlock Rhymer instantly descried
 The Sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside.
 That Bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
 And ken the lingo of the sp'ritual folk ;
 Says, Spunkies, Kelpies, a', they can explain them,
 And ev'n the vera deils they brawly ken * them).
 Auld Brig' appear'd of ancient Pictish race,
 The vera wrinkles Gothic in his face ;
 He seem'd as he wi' Time had warstl'd lang,
 Yet, teughly doure,† he bade an unco bang.‡
 New Brig' was buskit in a braw new coat,
 That he, at Lon'on, frae ane Adams got ;
 An's hand five taper staves as smooth's a bead,
 Vi' virls an' whirlygigums at the head.
 The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
 Spying the time-worn flaws in ev'ry arch ;
 At chanc'd his new-come neibor took his e'e,
 And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he !
 Wi' thieveless § sneer to see his modish mien,
 He, down the water, gies him this guid-een :—

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na, frien', ye'll think ye're nae sheepshank,||
 Ance ye were streekit owre frae bank to bank !
 But gin ye be a brig as auld as me—
 Tho' faith, that date, I doubt, ye'll never see—
 There'll be, if that day come, I'll wad a boddle,¶
 Some fewer whigmaleeries in your noddle.

* well-know.

† obdurate.

‡ withstood a heavy stroke.

§ unconcealed.

|| contemptible thing.

¶ wager a half-farthing.

¹ The Gos-hawk, or Falcon.—*R. B.*

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal ! ye but show your little mense,*
 Just much about it wi' your scanty sense :
 Will your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
 Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet,
 Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane and lime,
 Compare wi' bonie brigs o' modern time ?
 There's men of taste wou'd tak the Ducat stream,¹
 Tho' they should cast the vera sark and swim,
 E'er they would grate their feelings wi' the view
 O' sic an ugly, Gothic hulk as you.

AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk ! † puff'd up wi' windy pride !
 This mony a year I've stood the flood an' tide ;
 And tho' wi' crazy eild ‡ I'm sair forfairn, §
 I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn !
 As yet ye little ken about the matter,
 But twa-three winters will inform ye better.
 When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains,
 Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains ;
 When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
 Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil ;
 Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
 Or haunted Garpal ² draws his feeble source,
 Arous'd by blustering winds an' spotting thowes,
 In mony a torrent down the snaw-broo rowes ;

* manners.

† Cuckoo, foolish creature.
§ worn out.

‡ old age.

¹ A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig.—*R. B.*² The banks of Garpal Water is one of the few places in the West of Scotland where those fancy-scaring beings, known by the name of Ghais, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.—*R. B.*

While crashing ice, borne on the roaring spate,*
 weeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate ;
 and from Glenbuck,¹ down to the Ratton-key,²
 Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd, tumbling sea—
 When down ye'll hurl, (deil nor ye never rise !)
 And dash the gumlie jaups † up to the pouring skies !
 A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
 That Architecture's noble art is lost !³

NEW BRIG.

Fine architecture, trowth, I needs must say't o't,
 The L—d be thankit that we've tint ‡ the gate o't !
 Aunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,
 Hanging with threat'ning jut like precipices ;
 Over-arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
 Supporting roofs, fantastic, stony groves ;
 Windows and doors in nameless sculptures drest,
 With order, symmetry, or taste unblest ;
 Forms like some bedlam Statuary's dream,
 The craz'd creations of misguided whim ;
 Forms might be worshipp'd on the bended knee,
 And still the second dread command be free ;
 Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea !
 Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
 Of any mason reptile, bird or beast :

* flood.

† muddy drift.

‡ lost.

¹ The source of the River Ayr.—*R. B.*

² A small landing place above the large quay.—*R. B.*

³ This whole passage—penned ninety years ago—lately turned out to be strikingly prophetic. The "New Brig," which was not yet "streekit owre ae bank to bank" when the poem was composed, was closed from all traffic in 1877, a threatening rent having been discovered in its masonry. On the other hand, the "Auld Brig," with its "poor narrow foot-path of a reet," which for eighty years had been used for foot passengers only, was again opened for wheel carriages, the new brig being "a shapeless cairn."

Fit only for a doited * monkish race,
 Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace,
 Or cuifs † of later times, wha held the notion,
 That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion :
 Fancies that our guid Brugh denies protection,¹
 And soon may they expire, unblest wi' resurrection !

AULD BRIG.

O ye, my dear-remember'd, ancient yealings, ‡
 Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings !
 Ye worthy Proveses, an' mony a Bailie,
 Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil ay ;
 Ye dainty Deacons, an' ye douce Conveeners,
 To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners ;
 Ye godly Councils, wha hae blest this town ;
 Ye godly Brethren o' the sacred gown,
 Wha meekly gie your hurdies to the smiters ;
 And (what would now be strange), ye godly Writers ;
 A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo, §
 Were ye but here, what would ye say or do ?
 How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
 To see each melancholy alteration ;
 And, agonising, curse the time and place
 When ye begat the base degenerate race !
 Nae langer rev'rend men, their country's glory,
 In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain, braid story ;
 Nae langer thrifty citizens, an' douce,
 Meet owre a pint, or in the Council-house ;
 But staumrel, || corky-headed, graceless *Gentry*,
 The herryment ¶ and ruin of the country ;
 Men, three-parts made by tailors and by barbers,
 Wha waste your weel-hain'd gear on d—'d new brig
 and harbours !

* stupid.

† simpletons.

‡ coevals.

§ boiling flood.

|| half-witted.

¶ spoliation.

¹ A compliment to the "advanced liberalism" of the Ayr clergy.

NEW BRIG.

Now haud you there ! for faith ye've said enough,
And muckle mair than ye can mak to through.*
As for your Priesthood, I shall say but little,
Corbies and *Clergy* are a shot right kittle :
But, under favour o' your langer beard,
Abuse o' Magistrates might weel be spar'd ;
To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr, *wag-wits* nae mair can hae a handle
To mouth 'a Citizen,' a term o' scandal ;
Nae mair the Council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit ;
Men wha grew wise priggin owre hops an' raisins,
Or gather'd lib'ral views in Bonds and Seisins :
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shor'd † them with a glimmer of his lamp,
And would to Common-sense for once betray'd them,
Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

What farther clish-ma-claver might been said,
What bloody wars, if Sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell ; but, all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd in order bright ;
Adown the glittering stream they featly danc'd ;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanc'd :
They footed o'er the wat'ry glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet :
While arts of Minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling Bards heroic ditties sung.

O had M'Lauchlan,¹ thairm†-inspiring sage,
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,

* pass current.

† offered.

‡ catgut.

¹ A well-known performer of Scottish music on the violin.—R. B.

When thro' his dear strathspeys they bore with Highland
rage ;
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptured joys or bleeding cares ;
How would his Highland lug † been nobler fir'd,
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch inspir'd !
No guess could tell what instrument appear'd,
But all the soul of Music's self was heard ;
Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody pour'd moving on the heart.

The Genius of the Stream in front appears,
A venerable Chief advanc'd in years ;
His hoary head with water-lilies crown'd,
His manly leg with garter-tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet female Beauty hand in hand with Spring ;
Then, crown'd with flow'ry hay, came Rural Joy,
And Summer, with his fervid-beaming eye ;
All-cheering Plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow Autumn wreath'd with nodding corn ;
Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
By Hospitality with cloudless brow :
Next followed Courage with his martial stride,
From where the Feal wild-woody coverts hide ;¹
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
A female form, came from the tow'rs of Stair ;²
Learning and Worth in equal measures trode,
From simple Catrine, their long-lov'd abode ;³

† ear.

¹ A compliment to the warlike Montgomeries of Coilsfield. The Feal or Faile Water flows through the grounds behind the mansion, and joins the Ayr at Fealford.

² A compliment to Mrs Stewart of Stair.

³ A tribute to Professor Dugald Stewart of Catrine House.

last, white-rob'd Peace, crown'd with a hazel wreath,
 To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
 The broken, iron instruments of death :
 At sight of whom our Sprites forgot their kindling wrath.

[Mr Ballantine, to whom the foregoing poem is inscribed, was by profession a banker, and afterwards became Provost of Ayr. The erection of a new bridge was proceeding under his chief magistracy in the latter portion of 1786, and Burns, apparently taking a hint from Fergusson's Dialogue between the Plainstones and Causeway," composed his poem of "The Brigs of Ayr," about the end of September.]

FRAGMENT OF SONG.

THE night was still, and o'er the hill
 The moon shone on the castle wa' ;
 The mavis sang, while dew-drops hang
 Around her on the castle wa',
 Sae merrily they danced the ring
 Frae eenin' till the cock did crow ;
 And ay the o'erword o' the spring
 Was Irvine's bairns are bonie a'.

[The youngest daughter of Dr Lawrie of Newmilns possessed, in the poet's autograph, the eight lines which form our text : it is apparently the mere scrawl of something that was never more than a fragment]

EPIGRAM ON ROUGH ROADS.

I'M now arrived—thanks to the gods !—
 Thro' pathways rough and muddy,
 A certain sign that makin roads
 Is no this people's study :
 Altho' I'm not wi' Scripture cram'd,
 I'm sure the Bible says
 That heedless sinners shall be damn'd,
 Unless they mend their *ways*.

[These rough roads which the poet had to traverse are supposed to have lain betwixt Kilmarnock and Stewarton. In the latter town, his uncle Robert resided in 1786; and at no great distance was Dunlop House, the residence of Mrs Dunlop.

It is more than probable that Burns visited Mrs Dunlop during this October, as Gilbert's narrative tells us that their acquaintanceship began just before he resolved to go to Edinburgh. He says, "Mrs Dunlop sent off a person express to Mossgiel, distant fifteen or sixteen miles, with a very obliging letter desiring him to send her half a dozen copies of his poems, if he had them to spare, and begging he would do her the pleasure of calling at Dunlop House as soon as convenient."]

PRAYER.—O THOU DREAD POWER.

Lying at a reverend friend's house one night, the author left the following verses in the room where he slept :—

O THOU dread Power, who reign'st above,
I know thou wilt me hear,
When for this scene of peace and love,
I make my prayer sincere.

The hoary Sire—the mortal stroke,
Long, long be pleas'd to spare ;
To bless his little filial flock,
And show what good men are.

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
With tender hopes and fears,
O bless her with a mother's joys,
But spare a mother's tears !

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
In manhood's dawning blush,
Bless him, Thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish.

The beauteous, seraph sister-band—
With earnest tears I pray—

Thou know'st the snares on ev'ry hand,
Guide Thou their steps alway.

When, soon or late, they reach that coast,
O'er Life's rough ocean driven,
May they rejoice, no wand'rer lost,
A family in Heaven !

[This "reverend friend" was George Lawrie, who was ordained pastor of Loudoun, or Newmilns in 1763, and obtained the degree of D.D. in 1791.

The wife of this amiable minister was Mary Campbell, daughter of Professor Archibald Campbell of St Andrews. On the occasion that produced the text, Burns had called at the manse on his return from Kilmarnock, frustrated in his hopes of a second Ayrshire edition, and confined to the prospect of sailing for the West Indies in a few days. Dr Lawrie's children then comprised a son rising into manhood, and four daughters, the youngest being yet a girl.

The above verses were composed by him during the night-watches, and were left in his bedroom next morning. A considerable part of the second day was spent by the poet at the manse; and after a kindly parting with the happy family, he pursued his way home across the moors of Galston, accompanied only by his Muse, who did not refuse her inspiration, as the following memorable effusion sufficiently evinces.]

FAREWELL SONG TO THE BANKS OF AYR.

Tune—"Roslin Castle."

"I composed this song as I conveyed my chest so far on my road to Greenock, where I was to embark in a few days for Jamaica. I meant it as my farewell dirge to my native land."—*R. B.*

THE gloomy night is gath'ring fast,
Loud roars the wild, inconstant blast,
Yon murky cloud is foul with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain ;
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatt'red coveys meet secure ;
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

The Autumn mourns her rip'ning corn
By early Winter's ravage torn ;
Across her placid, azure sky,
She sees the scowling tempest fly :
Chill runs my blood to hear it rave ;
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonie banks of Ayr.

'Tis not the surging billow's roar,
'Tis not that fatal, deadly shore ;
Tho' death in ev'ry shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear :
But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierc'd with many a wound ;
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonie banks of Ayr.

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
Her heathy moors and winding vales ;
The scenes where wretched Fancy roves,
Pursuing past, unhappy loves !
Farewell, my friends ! farewell, my foes !
My peace with these, my love with those :
The bursting tears my heart declare—
Farewell, the bonie banks of Ayr !

[Professor Walker, who met Burns at breakfast with Dr Blacklock, shortly after his arrival in Edinburgh, gives the following interesting account of these verses :—" After breakfast I requested him to communicate some of his unpublished pieces, and he recited his farewell song to the Banks of Ayr, introducing it with a description of the circumstances in which it was composed, more striking than the poem itself. He had left Dr Lawrie's family, and, on his way home, had to cross a wide stretch of solitary moor. . . . The aspect of nature harmonized with his feelings. It was a lowering and heavy evening in the end of autumn. The wind was up, and whistled through the rushes and the long spear-grass which bent before it. The clouds were driving across the sky ; and cold pelting showers, at intervals, added discomfort of body to cheerlessness of mind. Under these circumstances, and in this frame, Burns composed his poem."]

LINES ON MEETING WITH LORD DAER.

THIS wot ye all whom it concerns,
 I, Rhymer Robin, alias Burns,
 October twenty-third,
 A ne'er-to-be-forgotten day,
 Sae far I sprackl'd * up the brae,
 I dinner'd wi' a Lord.

I've been at drucken writers' feasts,
 Nay, been bitch-fou 'mang godly priests—
 Wi' rev'rence be it spoken !—
 I've even join'd the honor'd jorum,
 When mighty Squireships of the quorum,
 Their hydra drouth did sloken.

But wi' a Lord !—stand out my shin,
 A Lord—a Peer—an Earl's son !
 Up higher yet, my bonnet !
 An' sic a Lord !—lang Scotch ells twa,†
 Our Peerage he o'erlooks them a',
 As I look o'er my sonnet.

But O for Hogarth's magic pow'r !
 To show Sir Bardie's willyart glow'r,‡
 An' how he star'd an' stammer'd,
 When, goavin, § as if led wi' branks, ||
 An' stumpin on his ploughman shanks,
 He in the parlour hammer'd.

I sidling shelter'd in a nook,
 An' at his Lordship steal't a look,
 Like some portentous omen ;

* scrambled.

† six feet high.

‡ wild-like gaze.

§ gazing timidly.

|| a kind of bridle

Except good sense and social glee,
 An' (what surpris'd me) modesty,
 I markèd nought uncommon.

I watch'd the symptoms o' the Great,
 The gentle pride, the lordly state,
 The arrogant assuming ;
 The fient a pride, nae pride had he,
 Nor sauce, nor state, that I could see,
 Mair than an honest ploughman.

Then from his Lordship I shall learn,
 Henceforth to meet with unconcern
 One rank as weel's another ;
 Nae honest, worthy man need care
 To meet with noble youthful Daer,
 For he but meets a brother.

[Basil William, Lord Daer, was the son and heir-apparent of the fourth Earl of Selkirk. In 1786, he had just returned from France, where he had mixed with some distinguished men (particularly Condorcet), who afterwards figured in the Revolution. He contracted very liberal opinions, and made an attempt to get into the British House of Commons as a Scotch member in the face of one of the provisions in the Articles of Union, which made the eldest son of a Scottish Peer ineligible for election. He died, unmarried, his 32nd year, in 1794, just as the French revolutionary government had merged into a Reign of Terror.]

MASONIC SONG.

Tune—"Shawn-boy," or "Over the water to Charlie."

YE sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,
 To follow the noble vocation ;
 Your thrifty old mother has scarce such another
 To sit in that honourèd station.
 I've little to say, but only to pray,
 As praying's the ton of your fashion ;
 A prayer from the Muse you well may excuse,
 'Tis seldom her favourite passion.

Ye powers who preside o'er the wind and the tide,
 Who markèd each element's border ;
 Who formed this frame with beneficent aim,
 Whose sovereign statute is order :—
 Within this dear mansion, may wayward Contention
 Or witherèd Envy ne'er enter ;
 May secrecy round be the mystical bound,
 And brotherly Love be the centre !

This impromptu is said to have been sung or recited by the poet on the occasion of his admission as an honorary member of the Kilwinning St John's Lodge, No. 22, Kilmarnock, on 26th October 1786.]

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.

“An honest man's the noblest work of God.”—POPE.

When this worthy old *sportsman* went out, last muirfowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, ‘the last of his fields,’ and expressed ardent wish to die and be buried in the muirs. On this hint the author composed his elegy and epitaph.—*R. B.*, 1787.

HAS auld Kilmarnock seen the deil ?
 Or great Mackinlay ¹ thrawn his heel ?
 Or Robertson ² again grown weel,
 To preach an' read ?
 “Na, waur than a’!” cries ilka chiel,
 “Tam Samson's dead !”

Kilmarnock lang may grunt an' graen,
 An' sigh, an' sab, an' greet her lane,
 An' cleed her bairns, man, wife, an' wean,
 In mourning weed ;
 To Death she's dearly pay'd the kane—*
 Tam Samson's dead !

* rent paid in kind.

A certain preacher, a great favourite with the million. *Vide* ‘The Ordination,’ stanza ii. (p. 180, vol. I.).—*R. B.*

¹ Another preacher, an equal favourite with the *few*, who was at that time ailing. For him see also ‘The Ordination,’ stanza ix.—*R. B.*

'The Brethren, o' the mystic 'level'
 May hing their head in woefu' bevel,
 While by their nose the tears will revel,
 Like ony bead;
 Death's gien the Lodge an unco devel—*
 Tam Samson's dead!

When Winter muffles up his cloak,
 And binds the mire¹ like a rock;
 When to the loughs the curlers flock,
 Wi' gleesome speed,
 Wha will they station at the 'cock'?—²
 Tam Samson's dead!

He was the king o' a' the core,
 To guard, or draw, or wick a bore,²
 Or up the rink² like Jehu roar,
 In time o' need;
 But now he lags on Death's 'hog-score'—²
 Tam Samson's dead!

Now safe the stately sawmont sail,
 And trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail,
 And eels, weel-ken'd for souple tail,
 And geds † for greed,
 Since, dark in Death's 'fish-creel, we wail'
 Tam Samson dead!

Rejoice, ye birring pairicks a';
 Ye cootie ‡ muircocks, crouselly craw;
 Ye maukins, § cock your fud fu' brav'
 Withouten dread;
 Your mortal fae is now awa—
 Tam Samson's dead!

* stunning blow.

† pikes.

‡ feathery-footed.

§ hares.

¹ "mire" must here be pronounced as having two syllables.² These are all technical terms in the game of Curling.

That woefu' morn be ever mourn'd,
Saw him in shootin graith * adorn'd,
While pointers round impatient burn'd,
 Frae couples free'd;
But och ! he gaed and ne'er return'd !
 Tam Samson's dead !

In vain auld age his body batters,
In vain the gout his ancles fetters,
In vain the burns cam down like waters,
 An acre braid !
Now ev'ry auld wife, greetin,† clatters
 " Tam Samson's dead ! "

Owre mony a weary hag he limpit,
An' ay the tither shot he thumpit,
Till coward Death behint him jumpit,
 Wi' deadly feide ;
Now he proclaims wi' tout o' trumpet,
 " Tam Samson's dead ! "

When at his heart he felt the dagger,
He reel'd his wonted bottle-s swagger,
But yet he drew the mortal trigger,
 Wi' weel-aimed heed ;
" L—d, five ! " he cry'd, an' owre did stagger—
 " Tam Samson's dead ! "

Ilk hoary hunter mourn'd a brither ;
Ilk sportsman-youth bemoan'd a father ;
Yon auld gray stane, amang the heather,
 Marks out his head ;
Whare Burns has wrote, in rhyming blether,
 " Tam Samson's Dead ! "

There, low he lies in lasting rest ;
Perhaps upon his mould'ring breast

* gear.

† weeping.

Some spitefu' muirfowl bigs her nest,
 To hatch an' breed :
 Alas ! nae mair he'll them molest !
 Tam Samson's dead !¹

When August winds the heather wave,
 And sportsmen wander by yon grave,
 Three volleys let his memory crave,
 O' pouter an' lead,
 Till Echo answer frae her cave,
 " Tam Samson's dead ! "

Heav'n rest his saul whare'er he be !
 Is th' wish o' mony mae than me :
 He had twa fauts, or maybe three,
 Yet what remead ?
 Ae social, honest man want we :
 Tam Samson's dead !

THE EPITAPH.

' Tam Samson's ' weel-worn clay here lies,
 Ye canting zealots, spare him !
 If honest worth in Heaven rise,
 Ye'll mend or ye win near him.

PER CONTRA.

Go, Fame, an' canter like a filly
 Thro' a' the streets an neuks o' Killie ;²
 Tell ev'ry social honest billie
 To cease his grievin ;
 For, yet unskait'h'd by Death's gleg gullie,*
 Tam Samson's leevin !

* sharp knife.

¹ This verse was first introduced in the enlarged edition, 1793.

² Killie is a phrase the country-folks sometimes use for the name of certain town in the west.—*R. D.*

"Tam" was nearly as great an original as his christian namesake of anther farm in Kirkoswald. He was a nurseryman and seedsman of good dit at the cross of Killie, a zealous sportsman, a keen mason, an enthusiastic curler, and as good a fellow as ever sat at a social board.

A certain comfortable little "Public," consisting of two storeys, owned by one Sandy Patrick, called "The Bowling-green House," in Back Street (long ago removed), was the favourite "howff" of Burns in Kilmarnock. Sandy was married to Tam Samson's daughter, and his house was famous for the quality of its liquors, especially a home-brewed ale, that was generally drunk from wooden caups, and therefore termed "Caup Ale." Samson died in 1795, and was buried in the Laigh Kirkyard. His grave is marked by a handsome stone on which the "Epitaph" is engraved.]

EPISTLE TO MAJOR LOGAN.

HAIL, thairm*-inspirin, rattlin, Willie !
Tho' fortune's road be rough an' hilly
To every fiddling, rhyming billie,

We never heed,
But take it like the unback'd filly,
Proud o' her speed.

When, idly goavin,† whyles we saunter ;
Yirr ! fancy barks, awa we canter,
Up hill, down brae, till some mishanter,‡
Some black bog-hole,
Arrests us, then the scathe an' banter
We're forced to thole.§

Hale be your heart ! hale be your fiddle !
Lang may your elbuck || jink and diddle,
To cheer you through the weary widdle
O' this wild warl'.
Until you on a crummock ¶ driddle,
A grey hair'd carl.

Come wealth, come poortith, late or soon,
Heaven send your heart-strings ay in tune,

catgut. † staring. ‡ mischance. § bear. || elbow. ¶ walking-staff.

Eve's bonie squad, priests wyte * them sheerly
For our grand fa' ;
But still, but still, I like them dearly—
God bless them a' !

Ochon for poor Castalian drinkers,
When they fa' foul o' earthly jinkers !
The witching, curs'd, delicious blinkers
Hae put me hyte, †
And gart me weet my waukrife winkers, †
Wi' girnin spite.

But by yon moon !—and that's high swearin—
An' every star within my hearin !
An' by her een wha was a dear ane !
I'll ne'er forget ;
I hope to gie the jads a clearin,
In fair play yet.

My loss I mourn, but not repent it ;
I'll seek my pursie whare I tint & it ;
Aunce to the Indies I were wonted,
Some cantraip || hour,
By some sweet elf I'll yet be dinted ;
Then *vive l'amour !*

Faites mes baissemains respectueusè,
To sentimental sister Susie,
And honest Lucky ; no to roose you,
Ye may be proud,
That sic a couple fate allows ye,
To grace your blood.

Nae mair at present can I measure,
An' trowth my rhymin ware's nae treasure ;

- blame.

† crazy.

‡ sleepless eyes.

§ lost.

|| witching

But when in Ayr, some half-hour's leisure,
 Be't light, be't dark,
 Sir Bard will do himself the pleasure
 To call at Park.

ROBERT BURNS.

Mossiel, 30th October 1786.

[Major William Logan was a retired military officer who lived a bachelor life with his mother and a maiden sister, at his villa of Park, near Ayr. A samples of his wit, Chambers records the following anecdotes. "The major was asked one day by an Ayr hostess if he would have water to the glass of spirits he had called for, and his reply was—'Water, my good woman! I would rather ye took the water out of it.' A young officer was talking freely on religious subjects in his company, and wound up with 'In fact, I look on God as my feudal superior, and myself as his tenant and vassal.'—'Yes,' quoth Logan, 'ye may weel say that, for I believe ye would pay him *feu-duties*.' The poor wit, in the end, was the victim of some severe bodily ailments. The Rev. Mr Cuthill, one of the Ayr ministers, called to see him, and remarked that it would require much fortitude to bear up under his sufferings, 'Aye! sir,' said the dying punster 'it would take *figititude*.'"]

The reader has now been led down to the close of October, and the bard still harps about the West Indies; neither has he forgotten the glamour of Jean Armour's eyes; he "mourns the loss" of her, but does "not repent it."

What about "Highland Mary" all this time, since "the second Sunday of May"? Alas! it is an assured fact that on some day during the currency of this month of October 1786, all that was mortal of poor Mary was laid under the turf, in the West Kirkyard of Greenock. In most editions of the poet's works, from Cromek's time downwards, a beautiful little poem called "A Prayer for Mary," is to be found. We have excluded it from what would have been its proper place in our first volume, because it is now ascertained that the verses were not composed by Burns, but by some unknown bard, and published in an old Magazine while our author was yet a youth. In 1786, Burns transcribed that old poem in a fair hand, changing the name in the original from "Serina" to *My Mary*, and tenderly applying its words and sentiments to the relationship then subsisting between Mary and himself. In that adapted form it is more than probable that it was placed in Mary's hand when they parted on that memorable Sunday evening.

Powers celestial! whose protection
 Ever guards the virtuous fair,
 While in distant lands I wander,
 Let my Mary be your care:

Let her form so fair and faultless—
 Fair and faultless as your own,
 Let my Mary's kindred spirit
 Draw your choicest influence down !

Make the gales you waft around her
 Soft and peaceful as her breast ;
 Breathing in the breeze that fans her,
 Soothe her bosom into rest :
 Guardian angels ! O protect her
 When in distant lands I roam ;
 To realms unknown while fate exiles me,
 Make her bosom still my home !]

FRAGMENT ON SENSIBILITY.

RUSTICITY'S ungainly form
 May cloud the highest mind ;
 But when the heart is nobly warm,
 The *good* excuse will find.

Propriety's cold, cautious rules
 Warm fervour may o'erlook ;
 But spare poor sensibility
 Th' ungente, harsh rebuke.

[A letter by Burns addressed to Mr Archibald Lawrie, son of the pastor of Loudoun, dated "Mossgiel, 13th November 1786," refers to Ossian's poems and a volume of Songs, sent along with the letter, in fulfilment of the poet's promise to lend these to the inmates of the manse. When the book of songs was opened, the foregoing lines on a slip of paper in the bard's holograph were found enclosed. Mrs Lawrie regarded the lines as a delicate excuse for him, if not a gentle rebuke to herself, in reference to a rather warm argument they had been engaged in, during the poet's last visit to St Margaret's Hill, about the unfortunate result of Miss Peggy Kennedy's intimacy with M'Dowall of Logan. The story of that transaction had excited a great sensation in Ayrshire, and Mrs Lawrie, disliking the subject as unsuitable for her family circle, put a peremptory stop to its discussion. The poet was ruffled by Mrs Lawrie's firmness, and the text displays his method of taking revenge.

Some reference to the story of this love-mishap will be found in our note to the song—"Young Peggy blooms our boniest lass."]

A WINTER NIGHT.

"Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pityless storm!
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these?"—SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN biting Boreas, fell * and doure,†
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r ;
When Phœbus gies a short-liv'd glow'r,‡
Far south the lift,§
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r,
Or whirling drift :

Ae night the storm the steeples rocked,
Poor Labour sweet in sleep was locked,
While burns, wi' snawy wreaths up-choked,
Wild-eddying swirl ;
Or, thro' the mining outlet bocked,
Down headlong hurl :

List'ning the doors an' winnocks rattle,
I thought me on the ourie || cattle,
Or silly ¶ sheep, wha bide this brattle **
O' winter war,
And thro' the drift, deep-lairing, sprattle ††
Beneath a scour.‡‡

Ilk happing bird,—wee, helpless thing !
That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee ?
Whare wilt thou cow'r thy chittering wing,
An' close thy e'e ?

* keen. † stern. ‡ stare. § sky. || shivering, drooping.
¶ helpless. ** pelting. †† scramble. ‡‡ broken cliff.

Ev'n you, on murdering errands toil'd,
Lone from your savage homes exil'd,
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cote spoil'd
My heart forgets,
While pityless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats !

Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign,
Dark-muffl'd, view'd the dreary plain ;
Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintive strain,
Slow, solemn, stole —

“ Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust !
And freeze, thou bitter-biting frost !
Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows !
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
More hard unkindness unrelenting,
Vengeful malice, unrepenting,
Than heaven-illumin'd Man on brother Man bestows !

“ See stern Oppression's iron grip,
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,
Woe, Want, and Murder o'er a land !
Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,
How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her side,
The parasite empoisoning her ear,
With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud Property, extended wide ;
And eyes the simple, rustic hind,
Whose toil upholds the glitt'ring show—
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance, unrefin'd—
Plac'd for her lordly use, thus far, thus vile, below !

“ Where, where is Love’s fond, tender throe,
With lordly Honor’s lofty brow,
The pow’rs you proudly own ?
Is there, beneath Love’s noble name,
Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
To bless himself alone !
Mark maiden-innocence a prey
To love-pretending snares :
This boasted Honor turns away,
Shunning soft Pity’s rising sway,
Regardless of the tears and unavailing pray’rs !
Perhaps this hour, in Misery’s squalid nest,
She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
And with a mother’s fears shrinks at the rocking blast !

“ Oh ye ! who, sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown !
Ill-satisfy’d keen nature’s clamorous call,
Stretch’d on his straw, he lays himself to sleep ;
While thro’ the ragged roof and chinky wall,
Chill, o’er his slumbers, piles the drifts heap !
Think on the dungeon’s grim confine,
Where Guilt and poor Misfortune pine !
Guilt, erring man, relenting view,
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch, already crushèd low
By cruel Fortune’s undeservèd blow ?
Affliction’s sons are brothers in distress ;
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss !”

I heard nae mair, for Chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snaw,
And hail’d the morning with a cheer,
A cottage-rousing craw.

But deep this truth impress'd my mind—
 Thro' all His works abroad,
 The heart benevolent and kind
 The most resembles God.

[The Poet in a letter speaks of the foregoing piece as his "first attempt in that irregular kind of measure in which many of our finest odes are written."

Dr Currie remarks of this poem that it is "highly characteristic both of the temper of mind, and of the condition of Burns. It begins with a description of a dreadful storm on a night in winter; the poet represents himself as lying in bed, and listening to its howling. In this situation he naturally turns his thoughts to the 'ourie cattle,' and the 'silly sheep,' exposed to all the violence of the tempest. After sympathizing with birds, and even beasts of prey, crowding thoughts pensively rise in his soul, as the moon, 'dark-mussl'd,' casts a dreary light on his window. In this state he hears a voice complaining in language and sentiment somewhat akin to that of his own early dirge, 'Man was made to mourn.'"

It seems to be a general opinion that the six opening stanzas, in the poet's native dialect, are equal to any he ever composed; and Coleridge has paid him the high compliment of imitating the concluding verses, in the moral application which closes his *Ancient Mariner*;—"He prayeth best who loveth best both man and bird and beast."]

SONG.—YON WILD MOSSY MOUNTAINS.

YON wild mossy mountains sae lofty and wide,
 That nurse in their bosom the youth o' the Clyde,
 Where the grouse lead their coveys thro' the heather to
 feed,
 And the shepherd tents his flock as he pipes on his reed.

Not Gowrie's rich valley, nor Forth's sunny shores,
 To me hae the charms o' yon wild, mossy moors;
 For there, by a lanely, sequesterèd stream,
 Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream.

Amang thae wild mountains shall still be my path,
 Ilk stream foaming down its ain green, narrow strath;
 For there, wi' my lassie, the day-lang I rove,
 While o'er us unheeded flie the swift hours o' love.

She is not the fairest, altho' she is fair ;
O' nice education but sma' is her share ;
Her parentage humble as humble can be ;
But I lo'e the dear lassie because she lo'es me.

To Beauty what man but maun yield him a prize,
In her armour of glances, and blushes, and sighs ?
And when wit and refinement hae polish'd her darts,
They dazzle our een, as they flie to our hearts.

But kindness, sweet kindness, in the fond-sparkling e'e,
Has lustre outshining the diamond to me ;
And the heart beating love as I'm clasp'd in her arms,
O, these are my lassie's all-conquering charms !

[The bard remarks—" This song alludes to a part of my private history, which it is of no consequence to the world to know." Stenhouse suggested " Highland Mary " as its theme ; and Cunningham, associating " moors and mosses many " with the idea of the poet's " Nannie," proposed to assign the heroineship to her.

As Burns admitted in one of his letters to George Thomson, that all his earlier love-songs were the breathings of real passion, bearing a legend on the heart faithfully inscribed on each, it is but reasonable that some interest should attach to the above simple effusion.

We have now no hesitation in assigning the close of 1786 as the date of this composition. Its author was in the town of Ayr on Friday, 24th November, to meet his patrons Ballantine and Aiken, before leaving for Edinburgh on the Monday following. By way of Muirkirk, he left Moss-giel on 27th November, on horseback ; passed the night and a portion of the following day with Mr Archibald Prentice, farmer, Covington, near Biggar, and arrived in Edinburgh in the afternoon of Tuesday the 28th. This honest farmer was an enthusiastic admirer of Burns. He kept a diary, from which it appears that Burns paid him a visit from Edinburgh on Tuesday the first, or Wednesday the second, of May 1787. Regarding which circumstance Chambers in 1856 observed, that it was one of several excursions of Burns, never before noticed by any biographer ; and these have generally " some obscurity, if not mystery resting upon them." He also suggested that this secret visit to Lanarkshire may have had some connection with the present song, in which a humble peasant-girl of Clydesdale bears a part in the poet's " private history which it is of no consequence to the world to know."]

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

EDINA ! Scotia's darling seat !

All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once, beneath a Monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's sovereign pow'rs :
From marking wildly-scatt'red flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honor'd shade.

Here Wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labours plies ;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise :
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod ;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail ;
Their views enlarg'd, their liberal mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale :
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,
Or modest Merit's silent claim ;
And never may their sources fail !
And never Envy blot their name !

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy, milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy !
Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
Heaven's beauties on my fancy shine ;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own His work indeed divine !

There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar ;
Like some bold veteran, grey in arms,
And mark'd with many a seamy scar :
The pond'rous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock,
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repell'd th' invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately Dome,
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Fam'd heroes ! had their royal home :
Alas, how chang'd the times to come !
Their royal name low in the dust !
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam !
Tho' rigid Law cries out, "'twas just !"

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore :
Ev'n I who sing in rustic lore,
Haply my sires have left their shed,
And fac'd grim Danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where your fathers led !

Edina ! Scotia's darling seat !
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs ;
Where once, beneath a Monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's sovereign pow'rs :
From marking wildly-scatt'red flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honor'd shade.

[The above address was one of the earliest efforts of the author's musings, after his arrival in the city. Mrs Alison Cockburn, authoress of the

ular song, "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," then a very aged y, thus wrote to a friend regarding the distinguished poetic visitant:—"he town is at present all agog with the 'Ploughman Poet,' who receives lation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession, ng, but coarse; yet he has a most enthusiastic heart of love. He has n Duchess Gordon and all the gay world. His favourite, for looks i manners, is Bess Burnet—no bad judge indeed"]

ADDRESS TO A HAGGIS.

FAIR fa' your honest, sonsie * face,
Great chieftain o' the pudding-race !
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Painch, † tripe, or thairm : ‡
Weel are ye wordy o' a grace
As lang's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin § wad help to mend a mill
In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic Labour dight,
An' cut you up wi' ready sleight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like ony ditch ;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin, rich !

Then, horn for horn, they stretch an' strive :
Deil tak the hindmost ! on they drive,

* plump.

† paunch.

‡ gut.

§ wooden pin used to fix the opening in the bag.

[In preparing this poem for publication in his new edition, the poet substituted a fresh verse for the following stanza which closes the copy that he had sent to the "Caledonian Mercury" in December 1786:—

Ye Powers wha gie us a' that's gude,
 Still bless auld Caledonia's brood
 Wi' great John Barleycorn's heart's blude
 In stoups and luggies;
 And on our board that King o' food,
 A glorious Haggis!

We have been informed by a descendant of Mr Morison, cabinetmaker in Mauchline, that this last verse was an impromptu *Grace* uttered by the poet when a haggis formed part of a Sunday meal in his ancestor's house; the poet having dropped in to take pot-luck, as he sometimes did, after forenoon service in Mauchline kirk.]

TO MISS LOGAN,

WITH BEATTIE'S POEMS FOR A NEW-YEAR'S GIFT,
 JAN. I, 1787.

AGAIN the silent wheels of time
 Their annual round have driven,
 And you, tho' scarce in maiden prime,
 Are so much nearer Heaven.

No gifts have I from Indian coasts
 The infant year to hail;
 I send you more than India boasts,
 In Edwin's simple tale.

Our sex with guile, and faithless love,
 Is charg'd, perhaps too true;
 But may, dear maid, each lover prove
 An Edwin still to you.

This elegant inscription was addressed to the "sentimental sister Susie," inserted in the author's "Epistle to Major Logan." At the date of that style (30th Oct. 1786), the poet had still the prospect of emigrating to the West Indies. The lapse of two short months, however, seemed to convert the prospect into a recollection into a dream.]

MR WILLIAM SMELLIE—A SKETCH.

SHREWD Willie Smellie to Crochallan came ;
 The old cock'd hat, the grey surtout, the same ;
 His bristling beard just rising in its might,
 'Twas four long nights and days to shaving night ;
 His uncomb'd grizzly locks, wild staring, thatch'd
 A head for thought profound and clear, unmatch'd ;
 Yet tho' his caustic wit was biting-rude,
 His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.

[This distinguished citizen of Edinburgh was born there in 1740. "There in my eye," wrote the bard, at a somewhat later period, "is our friend Smellie, a man positively of the first abilities and greatest strength of mind as well as one of the best hearts and keenest wits that I have ever met with."

Lord Monboddo used to address him as "my learned printer," for beside having planned and edited the "*Encyclopædia Britannica*" in 1771, he was the translator of Buffon, and author of several original works of established reputation, such as "*The Philosophy of Natural History*." His printing office was situated at the foot of Anchor Close, the site of which is now occupied as the printing and publishing premises of the *Scotsman* newspaper. Smellie was printer of the first Edinburgh edition of Burns's *Poems*; and the acquaintanceship thus begun, speedily ripened into a close intimacy and companionship. A little farther up the close referred to, which was entered from the High Street, below the Cross on the north side, was a famous Tavern kept by a genial old Highlandman, named Daunie Douglas. Its proximity to the Cross and the Parliament House, made this tavern a very convenient house of call, especially to those who transacted business with the learned typographer; and there, a few years before Burns came to Edinburgh, a Club had been formed by some of its distinguished frequenters. Foremost among these was Charles Hay, Advocate, afterwards Lord Newton, celebrated for his forensic and judicial talents; and now remembered chiefly for his social eccentricities and extraordinary fondness for claret-drinking. Smellie introduced Burns to this Club in January 1788. It bore the name of "the Crochallan Fencibles," and all its members held some pretended military rank or title; but the fencing exercises in which the corps were drilled, were those of raillery and wit only. At the introduction of new members, it was the practice to treat such novices with much apparent rudeness, as a trial of their tempers and humours. Burns underwent a severe castigation at the hands of the "Hangman" (Mr

Smellie), and the "Muster-master General" to the corps (Lord Newton); but as the poet had been let into the secret beforehand, he shewed himself 'equal to the occasion.'

Mr William Smellie predeceased our poet by upwards of one year, his death occurring on 24th June, 1795.]

RATTLIN, ROARIN WILLIE.

AS I cam by Crochallan,
 I cannilie keeket ben;
 Rattlin, roarin Willie
 Was sittin at yon boord-en';
 Sittin at yon boord-en',
 And amang gude companie;
 Rattlin, roarin Willie,
 You're welcome hame to me!

Composed out of compliment to one of the worthiest fellows in the world, William Dunbar, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, and Colonel of the Crochallan corps, a Club of wits who took that title at the time of raising the fencible regiments.—*R. B.*

SONG.—BONIE DUNDEE.

MY blessins upon thy sweet wee lippie!
 My blessins upon thy bonie e'e-brie!
 Thy smiles are sae like my blythe sodger laddie,
 Thou's ay the dearer, and dearer to me!

But I'll big a bow'r on yon bonie banks,
 Where Tay rins wimplin by sae clear;
 An' I'll cleed thee in the tartan sae fine,
 And mak thee a man like thy daddie dear.

[On the back of a letter sent by the Earl of Buchan to Burns is a pencil jotting, in the poet's hand, giving the opening lines of the old song, apparently noted down from the singing of Cleghorn. For the sake of the connection we here set them down:—

"O whar gat ye that happier-meal bannock?
 Silly auld bodie, O dinna ye see;

I gat it frae a young, brisk sodger laddie,
Atween Saint Johnstoun an' bonie Dundee

O gin I saw the laddie that gae me't!
Aft has he doudl't me up on his knee;
May heaven protect my bonie Scots laddie,
An' send him safe hame to his babie and me !"

Stenhouse, in his illustrations to Johnson's Museum, informs us that Burns sent a copy of his improved version of the song to his friend Cleghorn with the following laconic epistle annexed :—

"Dear Cleghorn, you will see by the above that I have added a stanza to Bonie Dundee.' If you think it will do, you may set it agoing

—Upon a ten string'd instrument,
And on the psaltery.

To Mr Cleghorn, *Farmer*.—God bless the trade !—*R. B.*"]

EXTEMPORE IN THE COURT OF SESSION.

Tune—"Killiecrankie."

LORD ADVOCATE.

He clench'd his pamphlets in his fist,
He quoted and he hinted,
Till, in a declamation-mist,
His argument he tint * it :
He gapèd for't, he grapèd for't,
He fand it was awa, man ;
But what his common sense came short,
He ekèd out wi' law, man.

MR ERSKINE.

Collected, Harry stood awae,
Then open'd out his arm, man ;
His Lordship sat wi' ruefu' e'e,
And ey'd the gathering storm, man :

* lost.

Like wind-driv'n hail it did assail,
 Or torrents owre a lin, man ;
 The BENCH sae wise lift up their eyes,
 Half-wauken'd wi' the din, man.

[The above lively portraitures represent Mr Ilay Campbell, Lord Advocate (afterwards Lord President), and Harry Erskine, Dean of Faculty.]

INSCRIPTION FOR THE HEADSTONE OF FERGUSSON THE POET.

No sculptured marble here, nor pompous lay,
 'No storied urn nor animated bust ;'
 This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way,
 To pour her sorrows o'er the Poet's dust.

ADDITIONAL STANZAS.

She mourns, sweet tuneful youth, thy hapless fate ;
 Tho' all the powers of song thy fancy fired,
 Yet Luxury and Wealth lay by in state,
 And, thankless, starv'd what they so much admired.

This tribute, with a tear, now gives
 A brother Bard—he can no more bestow ;
 But dear to fame thy Song immortal lives,
 A nobler monument than Art can shew.

[In Canongate Churchyard, Edinburgh, a graceful memorial was erected by the Scottish bard to mark the grave of his "elder brother in misfortune" and song.

Only the first four lines of the text are cut on the face of this interesting tablet, immediately under the following heading :—

"HERE LIES ROBERT FERGUSSON, POET.

Born September 5th 1751.—Died 16th October 1774."

On the reverse side these words are inscribed :—

"By special grant of the Managers to ROBERT BURNS, who erected this stone, This Burial-place is to remain for ever sacred to the memory of ROBERT FERGUSSON."]

INSCRIBED UNDER FERGUSSON'S PORTRAIT

CURSE on ungrateful man, that can be pleased,
 And yet can starve the author of the pleasure.
 O thou, my elder brother in misfortune,
 By far my elder brother in the Muses,
 With tears I pity thy unhappy fate !
 Why is the Bard unpitied by the world,
 Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures ?

[These lines were inscribed by Burns in a copy of Fergusson's Poem presented by him to a young lady in Edinburgh, and bear date, March 19th 1787.]

EPISTLE TO MRS SCOTT,

GUDEWIFE OF WAUCHOPE-HOUSE, ROXBURGHSHIRE.

I MIND it weel in early date,
 When I was beardless, young, and blate,*
 An' first could thresh the barn,
 Or haud a yokin at the pleugh ;
 An' tho' forfoughten† sair enough,
 Yet unco proud to learn :
 When first amang the yellow corn
 A man I reckon'd was,
 An' wi' the lave ilk merry morn
 Could rank my rig and lass,
 Still shearing, and clearing
 The tither stookèd raw,
 Wi' clavers,‡ an' haivers,§
 Wearing the day awa.

E'en then, a wish, (I mind its pow'r,)
 A wish that to my latest hour
 Shall strongly heave my breast,

* bashful.

† exhausted.

‡ gossip.

§ nonsense.

That I for poor auld Scotland's sake
Some usefu' plan or book could make,
Or sing a sang at least.
The rough burr-thistle, spreading wide
Amang the bearded bear,
I turn'd the weeder-clips aside,
An' spar'd the symbol dear :
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise ;
A Scot still, but * blot still,
I knew nae higher praise.

But still the elements o' sang,
In formless jumble, right an' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain ;
'Till on that har'st I said before,
My partner in the merry core,
She rous'd the forming strain ;
I see her yet the sonsie quean,
That lighted up my jingle,
Her witching smile, her pauky een
That gart my heart-strings tingle ;
I firèd, inspirèd,
At every kindling keek,
But bashing, and dashing,
I fearèd ay to speak.

Health to the sex ! ilk guid chiel says :
Wi' merry dance in winter days,
An' we to share in common ;
The gust o' joy, the balm of woe,
The saul o' life, the heaven below,
Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye surly sumphs,† who hate the name,
Be mindfu' o' your mither ;

* without.

† dolts.

She, honest woman, may think shame
 That ye're connected with her :
 Ye're wae men, ye're nae men
 That slight the lovely dears ;
 To shame ye, disclaim ye,
 Ilk honest birkie* swears.

For you, no bred to barn and byre,
 Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
 Thanks to you for your line :
 The marled plaid ye kindly spare,
 By me should gratefully be ware;†
 'Twad please me to the nine.‡
 I'd be mair vauntie o' my hap,
 Douce hingin owre my curple, §
 Than ony ermine ever lap,
 Or proud imperial purple.
 Farewell then, lang hale then,
 An' plenty be your fa' ;
 May losses and crosses
 Ne'er at your hallan || ca' !

R. BURNS.

March, 1787.

[This effusion was called forth by way of "Answer" to a rhymed complimentary letter which the poet received, about three months after his arrival in Edinburgh, from the wife of a Roxburghshire laird, or farmer of the wealthier class, who was an amateur in literature and the fine arts. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Rutherford, and she was niece to Mr. Cockburn, authoress of the popular lyric, 'I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling.' She concludes her address in these words :—

"O gif I ken'd but whar ye baide,
 I'd send to you a marled plaid ;
 'Twad hand your shouthers warm and braw,
 An' douce at kirk or market shaw ;
 Far south as weel as north, my lad,
 A' honest Scotsmen lo'e the 'maud :'

* lively fellow.

† worn.

‡ perfection.

§ rump.

|| doer.

Right wae that we're sae far frae ither;
Yet proud I am to ca' ye brither.

Your most obed. E.S."

To Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Bard. Feb. 1787.

he "Gudewife of Wauchope-house" died on Feb. 19th, 1789, just about
years after inditing her letter to Burns. The beautiful reference in the
d stanza is to the charming incident related in the poet's autobiography
ut "Handsome Nell," who initiated him in the mysteries of love. The
visited the "Guidwife of Wauchope-house" while on his Border tour
ne May following the date of his poem.]

VERSES INTENDED TO BE WRITTEN BELOW A NOBLE EARL'S PICTURE.

WHOSE is that noble, dauntless brow?
And whose that eye of fire?
And whose that generous princely mien,
E'en rooted foes admire?

Stranger! to justly show that brow,
And mark that eye of fire,
Would take *His* hand, whose vernal tints
His other works inspire.

Bright as a cloudless summer sun,
With stately port he moves;
His guardian Seraph eyes with awe
The noble Ward he loves.

Among the illustrious Scottish sons,
That Chief thou may'st discern;
Mark Scotia's fond-returning eye,
It dwells upon Glencairn.

Among several of the nobility and gentry to whom the bard was early
roduced in the Scottish capital, he seems to have taken most kindly to
nes Cunninghame, fourteenth Earl of Glencairn. He was born in 1749,
l therefore was just ten years older than the poet: he succeeded to the
e at his father's death in 1775, and was himself prematurely cut off in
uary 1791. His only brother, the Hon. and Rev. John Cunninghame
ried Isabella, sister of the Earl of Buchan, in 1785, and succeeded as
enth Earl of Glencairn when his brother died. When Earl John died in
6, without issue, the title became extinct.]

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR WOODS ON HIS BENEFIT NIGHT,
MONDAY, 16TH APRIL 1787.

WHEN, by a generous Public's kind acclaim,
That dearest need is granted—honest fame ;
When *here* your favour is the actor's lot,
Nor even the *man* in *private* life forgot ;
What breast so dead to heavenly Virtue's glow,
But heaves impassion'd with the grateful throe ?

Poor is the task to please a barb'rous throng,
It needs no Siddons' powers in Southern's song ;
But here an ancient nation fam'd afar,
For genius, learning high, as great in war.
Hail, CALEDONIA, name for ever dear !
Before whose sons I'm honour'd to appear ?
Where every science, every nobler art,
That can inform the mind or mend the heart.
Is known ; as grateful nations oft have found,
Far as the rude barbarian marks the bound.
Philosophy,¹ no idle pedant dream,
Here holds her search by heaven-taught Reason's bear
Here History ² paints with elegance and force
The tide of Empire's fluctuating course ;
Here Douglas ³ forms wild Shakspeare into plan,
And Harley ⁴ rouses all the God in man.
When well-form'd taste and sparkling wit unite
With manly lore, or female beauty bright,
(Beauty, where faultless symmetry and grace
Can only charm us in the second place),

¹ Professor Reid at St Andrews, and Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh.

² Robertson and Hume the historians.

³ Home's Tragedy of Douglas.

⁴ The "Man of Feeling," by Henry Mackenzie.

witness my heart, how oft with panting fear,
 on this night, I've met these judges here !
 it still the hope Experience taught to live,
 equal to judge—you're candid to forgive.
 o hundred-headed Riot here we meet,
 with decency and law beneath his feet ;
 or Insolence assumes fair Freedom's name :
 like CALEDONIANS, you applaud or blame.

Thou, dread Power ! whose empire-giving hand
 has oft been stretch'd to shield the honour'd land !
 strong may she glow with all her ancient fire ;
 may every son be worthy of his sire ;
 firm may she rise, with generous disdain
 at Tyranny's, or direr Pleasure's chain ;
 still Self-dependent in her native shore,
 bold may she brave grim Danger's loudest roar,
 till Fate the curtain drop on worlds to be no more.

[William Woods, who was styled the "Scottish Roscius," had been an intimate associate of the poet Fergusson, who thus remembered him in his "Last Will :"—

"To Woods, whose genius can provoke
 His passions to the bowl or sock,
 For love to thee and to the Nine,
 Be my immortal *Shakespeare* thine."

Woods was born in 1751, and died in 1802. His headstone in the Old Calton burial-ground at Edinburgh having fallen into decay, was renewed in 1866 by "a number of old citizens who remembered his fame, and the pleasure he often afforded them."]

THE BONIE MOOR-HEN.

THE heather was blooming, the meadows were mawn,
 Our lads gaed a-hunting ae day at the dawn,
 O'er moors and o'er mosses and mony a glen,
 At length they discover'd a bonie moor-hen.

Chorus.—I rede you, beware at the hunting, young mer
 I rede you, beware at the hunting, young mer
 Take some on the wing, and some as they sprin
 But cannily steal on a bonie moor-hen.

Sweet-brushing the dew from the brown heather bell;
 Her colours betray'd her on yon mossy fells;
 Her plumage outlustr'd the pride o' the spring,
 And O! as she wanton'd sae gay on the wing.
 I rede you, &c.

Auld Phœbus himsel, as he peep'd o'er the hill,
 In spite at her plumage he try'd his skill;
 He levell'd his rays where she bask'd on the brae—
 His rays were outshone, and but mark'd where she lay
 I rede you, &c.

They hunted the valley, they hunted the hill,
 The best of our lads wi' the best o' their skill;
 But still as the fairest she sat in their sight,
 Then, whirr! she was over, a mile at a flight.
 I rede you, &c.

* * * *

[The above is formed on the model of an old song of more wit than delicacy which is found in the Chrochallan collection.

Professor Dugald Stewart, writing in reference to this period of Burns' life, says, "Notwithstanding various reports I heard of Burns's predilection for convivial, and not very select society, I should have concluded in favour of his habits for sobriety from all that fell under my own observation." Chambers remarks concerning this passage:—"The professor probably alludes to such men as Smellie, Dunbar, Mr Nicol, of the High School; Mr Alexander Cunningham, writer, and others, who, though not members of Professor Stewart's set, and though perhaps of over-indulgent habits were yet men of honourable character and respectable position. Amongst them Burns felt himself at his proper level."

SONG.—MY LORD A-HUNTING.

Chorus.—My lady's gown, there's gairs upon't,
And gowden flowers sae rare upon't ;
But Jenny's jimps and jirkinet,
My lord thinks meikle mair upon't.

My lord a-hunting he is gane,
But hounds or hawks wi' him are nane ;
By Colin's cottage lies his game,
If Colin's Jenny be at hame.
My lady's gown, &c.

My lady's white, my lady's red,
And kith and kin o' Cassillis' blude ;
But her ten-pund lands o' tocher gude
Were a' the charms his lordship lo'ed.
My lady's gown, &c.

Out o'er yon muir, out o'er yon moss,
Whare gor-cocks thro' the heather pass,
There wons auld Colin's bonie lass,
A lily in a wilderness.
My lady's gown, &c.

Sae sweetly move her genty limbs,
Like music notes o' lovers' hymns :
The diamond-dew in her een sae blue,
Where laughing love sae wanton swims.
My lady's gown, &c.

My lady's dink, my lady's drest,
The flower and fancy o' the west ;
But the lassie that a man lo'es best,
O that's the lass to mak him blest.
My lady's gown, &c.

[This production paints too true a picture of aristocratic life as it prevailed the days of Burns, and which perhaps too often found imitation in a lower ale of society.]

MINOR PIECES, SCRAPS, AND EPIGRAMS.

[The dedication of the Author's Edinburgh Edition is dated 4th April 1787, and a few days thereafter he commenced a private Journal, protected with clasp and patent lock, as "a security at least equal to the bosom of any friend whatsoever." His first entry in that secret record indicates the proposed contents of the book, thus—"My own private story, my life and adventures, my rambles; the frowns and smiles of Fortune on my bardship; my poems and fragments that must never see the light—these shall occasionally be inserted."

The reason which he states for procuring the book is that, while he feared he would have some confidential friend to laugh or be grave with him, he yet doubts the possibility "of so intimate and cordial a coalition of friendship as that one man may pour out his every thought and floating fancy, with unreserved confidence, to another, without hazard of losing part of the respect which man deserves from man.—For those reasons (he adds) I have determined to make these pages my confidant."

The present, and every collection of his writings, form a strange commentary on the above passage. When the bard felt himself dying, he lamented his then physical disability, and his lost opportunities, to arrange his papers so that none of his writings should go forth to the world except such as might sustain his moral and literary reputation. He also expressed such rueful anticipations of damage to his good name from the raking up of every little incident in his history by "hackney scribblers,"—that in the days, we may well wonder how so little regard has been paid to injunctions and wishes thus recorded, both in the day of his strength, and in the night of his woe. The world, however, has decided, in spite of the bard's protestations, that every good, bad, and indifferent scrap he is known to have penned, shall be brought to light and examined; and that incident in his life is too petty to be rehearsed and made the subject of comment.

The editor of these volumes would fain escape from the necessity of including in this collection such trifling versicles as, now and again, must lay before the reader. Few of those referred to are equal in quality to the author's avowed compositions; and the authenticity of certain of them is neither vouched by the production of the poet's manuscript, nor made sure by the native ring and flow which characterise the true language of Burns. But be they what they may, the editor feels bound to be cautious in excluding pieces that have already been adopted in so-called standard editions of the poet's works.]

EPIGRAM AT ROSLIN INN.

My blessings on ye, honest wife!
 I ne'er was here before ;
 Ye've wealth o' gear for spoon and knife—
 Heart could not wish for more.
 Heav'n keep you clear o' sturt* and strife,
 Till far ayont fourscore,
 And while I toddle on thro' life,
 I'll ne'er gae by your door !

Alexander Nasmyth, who painted the well-known portrait of Burns, had occasional rambles with the poet in the early spring of 1787, in the suburbs of Edinburgh. After a ramble on the moors, they crossed eastward, by way of Penicuik to Roslin, and had breakfast at the inn there, then kept by Mrs David Wilson. The cheer provided put Burns into such good humour, that he scrawled these complimentary lines to his hostess, on the back of a wooden platter.]

EPIGRAM ADDRESSED TO AN ARTIST.

DEAR ———, I'll gie ye some advice,
 You'll tak it no uncivil :
 You shouldna paint at angels mair,
 But try and paint the devil.
 To paint an Angel's kittlet wark,
 Wi' Nick, there's little danger :
 You'll easy draw a lang-kent face,
 But no sae weel a *stranger*.—R. B.

EPIGRAM TO AN ARTIST.—According to Chambers, Burns was taken by a friend to the studio of a well-known artist in Edinburgh, whom he had engaged on a representation of Jacob's dream ; and after minutely examining the work, he wrote these lines on the back of a little sketch which is still preserved in the painter's family.]

* trouble.

† difficult.

THE BOOK-WORMS.

THROUGH and through th' inspir'd leaves,
 Ye maggots, make your windings ;
 But O respect his lordship's taste,
 And spare the golden bindings.

[On visiting a nobleman in Edinburgh, Burns was shewn into the library where stood a Shakspeare splendidly bound. He found the leaves so worm-eaten, from never being used, and wrote the above epigram on ample margin of one of its pages.]

ON ELPHINSTONE'S TRANSLATION OF
MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS.

O THOU whom Poesy abhors,
 Whom Prose has turnèd out of doors,
 Heard'st thou yon groan?—proceed no further,
 'Twas laurel'd Martial calling "murther."

[Burns himself thus narrates, in one of his letters to Clarinda, the incident that gave rise to the foregoing very pointed epigram :—"A Mr Elphinstone has given a translation of Martial, a famous Latin poet. The poet Elphinstone can only equal his prose notes. I was sitting in a merchant's shop of my acquaintance, waiting somebody ; he put Elphinstone into my hand, and asked my opinion of it. I begged leave to write it on a blank leaf, which I did."]

SONG—A BOTTLE AND FRIEND.

" There's nane that's blest of human kind,
 But the cheerful and the gay, man,
 Fal la, la," &c.

HERE'S a bottle and an honest friend !
 What wad ye wish for mair, man ?
 Wha kens, before his life may end,
 What his share may be o' care, man ?

Then catch the moments as they fly,
And use them as ye ought, man:
Believe me, happiness is shy,
And comes not ay when sought, man.

INES WRITTEN UNDER THE PICTURE OF THE CELEBRATED MISS BURNS.

CEASE, ye prudes, your envious railing,
Lovely Burns has charms—confess:
True it is, she had one failing,
Had a woman ever less?

his frail beauty resided in Edinburgh during the period of our poet's sojourn there. Kay, in his *Edinburgh Portraits*, has two pictures of one of these is dated 1785, and the other is undated.]

EPITAPH FOR WILLIAM NICOL, OF THE HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH.

YE maggots, feed on Nicol's brain,
For few sic feasts you've gotten;
And fix your claws in Nicol's heart,
For deil a bit o'ts rotten.

EPITAPH FOR MR WILLIAM MICHIE, SCHOOLMASTER OF CLEISH PARISH, FIFESHIRE.

HERE lie Willie Michie's banes,
O Satan, when ye tak him,
Gie him the schulin o' your weans,
For clever deils he'll mak them!

unningham says that Michie was introduced to Burns in Edinburgh:
no farther information has been vouchsafed to us regarding this clever
de nie.]

BOAT-SONG.—HEY, CA' THRO'.

UP wi' the carls o' Dysart,
 And the lads o' Buckhaven,
 And the kimmers o' Largo,
 And the lasses o' Leven.

Chorus.—Hey, ca' thro', ca' thro',
 For we hae mickle ado;
 Hey, ca' thro', ca' thro',
 For we hae mickle ado.

We hae tales to tell,
 An' we hae sangs to sing;
 We hae pennies to spend,
 An' we hae pints to bring.
 Hey, ca' thro', &c.

We'll live a' our days,
 And them that comes behin',
 Let them do the like,
 An' spend the gear they win.
 Hey, ca' thro', &c.

[There is much of wholesome philosophy in this canty little song. A friend of ours who was accustomed to sing it to the melody supplied by Burns to Johnson, deeming the song rather short, added the following verse :—

“ Ne'er break your heart for love;
 Just turn the boatie about;
 There's as gude fish i' the sea
 As ever yet cam out.”
 Hey, ca' thro', &c.]

ADDRESS TO WM. TYTLER, ESQ.
OF WOODHOUSELEE,

WITH AN IMPRESSION OF THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT.

EVERED defender of beauteous Stuart,¹
Of Stuart, a name once respected;
name, which to love was the mark of a true heart.
But now 'tis despis'd and neglected.

ho' something like moisture conglobes in my eye,
Let no one misdeem me disloyal;
poor friendless wand'rer may well claim a sigh.
Still more, if that wand'rer were royal.

ly fathers that name have rever'd on a throne:
My fathers have died to right it;
hose fathers would spurn their degenerate son,
That name should he scoffingly slight it.

ill in prayers for King George I most heartily join,
The Queen, and the rest of the gentry:
e they wise, be they foolish, is nothing of mine;
Their title's avow'd by my country.

ut why of that epocha make such a fuss,
That gave us th' Electoral stem?
bringing them over was lucky for us,
I'm sure 'twas as lucky for them.

ut loyalty truce! we're on dangerous ground;
Who knows how the fashions may alter?
he doctrine, to-day, that is loyalty sound,
To-morrow may bring us a halter!

¹Mr Tytler's "Vindication of Mary Queen of Scots" appeared in the
year our poet was born, and reached a fourth edition. In 1783, he edited
the poems of King James I. of Scotland.

I send you a trifle, a head of a bard,
 A trifle scarce worthy your care ;
 But accept it, good Sir, as a mark of regard,
 Sincere as a saint's dying prayer.

Now life's chilly evening dim shades on your eye,
 And ushers the long dreary night :
 But you, like the star that athwart gilds the sky,
 Your course to the latest is bright.

My muse jilted me here, and turned a corner on me, and
 I have not got again into her good graces. . . .

Do me the justice to believe me sincere in my grateful
 remembrance of the many civilities you have honored me
 with since I came to Edinburgh, and in assuring you that
 I have the honor to be, revered Sir,

Your obliged and very humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

LAWNMARKET, *Friday noon.*

(*Addressed*) MR TYTLER of Woodhouselee, New Street

[It seems evident that the above was forwarded to the poet's venerable
 correspondent on 4th May 1787,—just the day before he started on his
 Border tour with Robert Ainslie. The poet had frequent interviews with
 Mr Tytler, in connection with the music and letterpress for *John's
 Museum* which Mr Tytler had hitherto superintended. The first volume
 of that work appeared about the end of May; and Burns relieved the
 gentleman of such editorial labours in respect of the succeeding volumes,
 he being then in his seventy-seventh year.

Mr Tytler survived to 12th Sept. 1792, a healthy and happy old man.
 his prescription for all who desired to enjoy like blessings, was "temperate
 meals, good music, and a sound conscience."]

EPIGRAM TO MISS AINSLIE IN CHURCH

FAIR maid, you need not take the hint,
 Nor idle texts pursue :
 'Twas guilty sinners that he meant,
 Not *Angels* such as you,

[Among the intimacies formed by Burns in Edinburgh, a very innocent
 and agreeable one was that contracted with Mr Robert Ainslie, son of a

mer at Berrywell near Dunse, then a writer's clerk, and afterwards a
iter to the Signet. On his tour through the south-eastern and border
ities of Scotland, Burns arrived at Berrywell in the evening of
aturday the 5th of May. Next day he attended the church at Dunse
ng with the Ainslie family, and the minister gave out a text containing
heavy denunciation against obstinate sinners. Seeing Miss Ainslie
gaged in a search for it, Burns asked for her Bible, and immediately
te the above lines on the inner board, and presented it for her perusal.
Of Miss Ainslie, the poet's Journal makes frequent mention, in very
nplimentary terms. The last of these is under 23d May—"Found Miss
slic—the amiable, the sensible, the good-humoured, the sweet Miss
slic—all alone at Berrywell. Heavenly powers, who know the weakness
human hearts, support mine ! . . . Charming Rachel ! may thy bosom
er be wrung by the evils of this life of sorrows, or by the villany of this
rld's sons !"

URLESQUE LAMENT FOR THE ABSENCE OF
WILLIAM CREECH, PUBLISHER.

AULD chuckie * Reekie's¹ sair distrest,
Down droops her ance weel burnish'd crest,
Nae joy her bonie buskit † nest
Can yield ava,
Her darling bird that she lo'es best—
Willie, 's awa

O Willie was a witty wight,
And had o' things an unco' sleight,†
Auld Reekie ay he keepit tight,
 And trig an' brow :
But now they'll busk her like a fright,—
 Willie's awa !

- maternal.

† decorated.

† skill.

¹ Few readers will require to be told that "Auld Reekie" means Edinburgh, so designed from the smoke of its many chimneys hovering over the city. The poet here refers to that city under the figure of the maternal hen with her brood of chickens.

The stiffest o' them a' he bow'd,
 The bauldest o' them a' he cow'd ;
 They durst nae mair than he allow'd,
 That was a law :
 We've lost a birkie * weel worth gowd ;
 Willie 's awa !

Now gawkies,† tawpies,‡ gowks § and fools,
 Frae colleges and boarding schools,
 May sprout like simmer puddock-stools
 In glen or shaw ;
 He wha could brush them down to mools— ||
 Willie, 's awa !

The brethren o' the commerce-chaumer¹
 May mourn their loss wi' doolfu' clamour ;
 He was a dictionar and grammar
 Among them a' ;
 I fear they'll now mak mony a stammer ;
 Willie 's awa !

Nae mair we see his levee door
 Philosophers and Poets pour,
 And toothy critics by the score,
 In bloody raw !
 The adjutant o' a' the core—
 Willie, 's awa !

Now worthy Gregory's latin face,
 Tytler's and Greenfield's modest grace ;
 M'Kenzie, Stewart, such a brace
 As Rome ne'er saw ;

* sharp fellow.
 § stupids.

† simpletons.
 || dust.

‡ empty fops.

¹ The Chamber of Commerce, of which Creech was Secrerary.

They a' maun meet some ither place,¹
Willie 's awa !

Poor Burns ev'n "Scotch Drink" canna quicken,
He cheeps * like some bewilder'd chicken
Scar'd frae it's minnie and the cleckin,[†]
By hoodie-craw ;
Grief's gien his heart an unco kickin,
Willie 's awa !

Now ev'ry sour-mou'd girnin blellum, ‡
And Calvin's folk, are fit to fell him ;
Ilk self-conceited critic skellum §
His quill may draw ;
He wha could brawlie ward their bellum—
Willie, 's awa !

Up wimpling || stately Tweed I've sped,
And Eden scenes on crystal Jed,
And Ettrick banks, now roaring red,
While tempests blaw ;
But every joy and pleasure's fled,
Willie 's awa !²

May I be Slander's common speech ;
A text for Infamy to preach ;
And lastly, streekit out to bleach
In winter snaw ;
When I forget thee, WILLIE CREECH,
Tho' far awa !

May never wicked Fortune touzle him !
May never wicked men bamboozle him !

* chirps.

† mother and brood.

‡ scolding fellow.

§ wiseacre.

|| winding.

The breakfasts in Creech's house were attended by the elite of Scotland's learned men.

This verse is not in the original MS.

Pardon my transport, gentle shade,
While o'er the turf I bow ;
Thy earthly house is circumscrib'd,
And solitary now.

Not one poor stone to tell thy name,
Or make thy virtues known ;
But what avails to me—to thee,
The sculpture of a stone ? ⁽¹⁾

From thy lov'd friends, when first thy heart
Was taught by Heav'n to glow,
Far, far remov'd, the ruthless stroke
Surpris'd, and laid thee low.

At the last limits of our isle,
Wash'd by the western wave,
Touch'd by thy fate, a thoughtful bard
Sits lonely by thy grave.

Pensive he eyes, before him spread
The deep, outstretch'd and vast ;
His mourning notes are borne away
Along the rapid blast. ⁽²⁾

Him too the stern impulse of Fate
Resistless bears along ;
And the same rapid tide shall overwhelm
The Poet and the Song.

The tear of pity which he sheds,
He asks not to receive ;
Let but his poor remains be laid
Obscurely in the grave.

His grief-worn heart, with truest joy,
Shall meet the welcome shock :

His airy harp shall lie unstrung,
And silent as the rock.

O my dear maid, my Stella, when
Shall this sick period close,
And lead the solitary bard
To his belov'd repose?

[The preceding ten stanzas, which form a kind of connected whole, are progressively culled from a monotonous effusion twenty verses long, that was transcribed by Burns into a manuscript book containing many of his early productions, and presented by him to Mrs Dunlop of Dunlop. Burns, in his heading prefixed to the elegy, does not claim it as his own; but even if it were certain that Burns was not the author, still (as Alex. Smith observes) "the knowledge that he admired it, and that through his agency it alone exists, is considered sufficient excuse for its admission here."

We now proceed to record, in small type, the stanzas omitted in our abridgement of this singular elegy.

(¹) I'll sit me down upon this turf, and wipe the rising tear :
The chill blast passes swiftly by, and flits around thy bier.

Dark is the dwelling of the dead, and sad their house of rest :
Low lies the head, by death's cold arms in awful fold embrac'd.

I saw the grim Avenger stand incessant by thy side,
Unseen by thee ; his deadly breath thy lingering frame destroy'd.

Pale grew the roses on thy cheek, and wither'd was thy bloom,
Till the slow poison brought thy youth untimely to the tomb.

Thus wasted are the ranks of men—youth, health, and beauty fall ;
The ruthless ruin spread around, and overwhelms us all.

Behold where, round thy narrow house, the graves unnumber'd lie ;
The multitude that sleep below existed but to die.

Some, with the tottering steps of age, trod down the darksome way ;
And some, in youth's lamented prime, like thee were torn away :

Yet these, however hard their fate, their native earth receives ;
Amid their weeping friends they died, and fill their father's graves.

.

(²) And while, amid the silent dead thy hapless fate I mourn,
My own long sorrows freshly bleed, and all my griefs return :

Like thee, cut off in early youth, and flower of beauty's pride,
My friend, my first and only joy, my much lov'd Stella died.]

THE BARD AT INVERARY.

WHOE'ER he be that sojourns here,
 I pity much his case,
 Unless he come to wait upon
 The Lord *their* God, "His Grace."

There's naething here but Highland pride,
 And Highland scab and hunger :
 If Providence has sent me here,
 'Twas surely in an anger.

[The irritation of the poet is farther shewn by the only scrap of correspondence which has reached us, dated from one of the stages of his journey. It is addressed to his friend Ainslie, thus—"Arrochar, by Loch Long, June 27, 1787.—I write you this on my tour thro' a country where savage streams tumble over savage mountains, thinly overspread with savage flocks, which starvingly support as savage inhabitants. My last stage was Inverary; to-morrow night's stage will be Dumbarton." It is understood that the bile of the poet was roused at Inverary, because, in consequence of the superabundance of guests or visitors at the Castle, several of these had to be accommodated at the Inn, and the landlord had no consideration to bestow on passing travellers like Burns.]

EPIGRAM TO MISS JEAN SCOTT.

O HAD each Scot of ancient times
 Been Jeanie Scott, as thou art ;
 The bravest heart on English ground
 Had yielded like a coward.

[She is designed "of Ayr." Nothing whatever is known regarding her, or the incident that called forth the compliment.]

ON THE DEATH OF JOHN M'LEOD, ESQ.,
 BROTHER TO A YOUNG LADY, A PARTICULAR FRIEND
 OF THE AUTHOR.

SAD thy tale, thou idle page,
 And rueful thy alarm :
 Death tears the brother of her love
 From Isabella's arms.

Sweetly deckt with pearly dew
The morning rose may blow ;
But cold successive noontide blasts
May lay its beauties low.

Fair on Isabella's morn
The sun propitious smil'd ;
But, long ere noon, succeeding clouds
Succeeding hopes beguil'd.

Fate oft tears the bosom chords
That Nature finest strung ;
So Isabella's heart was form'd,
And so that heart was wrung.

Dread Omnipotence alone
Can heal the wound he gave—
Can point the brimful care-worn eyes
To scenes beyond the grave.

Virtue's blossoms there shall blow,
And fear no withering blast ;
There Isabella's spotless worth
Shall happy be at last.

[Burns was on very intimate terms with Miss Isabella M'Leod, during his first winter-sojourn in Edinburgh. An elder sister of hers, Miss Flora M'Leod, had, in 1779, married Colonel James Mure-Campbell of Rowallan, who, in 1782, succeeded to the Earldom of Loudoun. That lady, however, died on 3rd Sep. 1780, a few hours after giving birth to her only child, Flora, who became Countess of Loudoun at the age of only six years, when her father died, in 1786. Through Mr Gavin Hamilton, who was factor for the unfortunate Earl and the young Countess, Burns had been introduced to the M'Leod family. Dr Johnson, in his tour in the Hebrides (1773), thus notices that household :—"The family of Raasay consists of the laird, the lady, three sons, and ten daughters. For the sons there is a tutor in the house, and the lady is said to be very skilful and diligent in the education of her girls. More gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestic society, is not to be found in the most polished countries."

Such is a sample of the society which received Burns on the footing of friendship in Edinburgh. He afterwards composed a song, "Raving winds

and her blowing," referring to Isabella M'Leod's grief for the loss of family ties by death. Her brother John's death occurred on 20th July 1817, while the poet was resting at Mossiel, after his trip to Greenock, Lerary, Loch Long, and Dumbarton.]

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.

This performance is but mediocre, but my grief was sincere. The last I saw the worthy, public-spirited man—a man he was! how few of the pledged breed that pass for such, deserve the designation!—he pressed my hand, and asked me with the most friendly warmth if it was in his power to serve me; and if so, that I would oblige him by telling him how. I had nothing to ask of him; but if ever a child of his should be so unfortunate as to be under the necessity of asking anything of so poor a man as I am, it may not be in my power to grant it, but, by G— I shall try!"—*B. in Glenriddell MSS.*

THE lamp of day with ill-presaging glare,
Dim, cloudy, sank beneath the western wave;
Th' inconstant blast howl'd thro' the darkening air,
And hollow whistled in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wander'd by each cliff and dell,
Once the lov'd haunts of Scotia's royal train;¹
Or mus'd where limpid streams, once hallow'd, well,²
Or mould'ring ruins mark the sacred fane.³

Th' increasing blast roared round the beetling rocks,
The clouds, swift-wing'd, flew o'er the starry sky,
The groaning trees untimely shed their locks,
And shooting meteors caught the startled eye.

The paly moon rose in the livid east,
And 'mong the cliffs disclos'd a stately form
In weeds of woe, that frantic beat her breast,
And mix'd her wailings with the raving storm.

¹ The King's Park, at Holyrood House.—*R. B.*

² St Anthony's well.—*R. B.*

³ St Anthony's Chapel.—*R. B.*

Wild to my heart the filial pulses glow,
'Twas Caledonia's trophied shield I view'd :
Her form majestic droop'd in pensive woe,
The lightning of her eye in tears imbued.

Revers'd that spear, redoubtable in war,
Reclined that banner, erst in fields unfurl'd,
That like a deathful meteor gleam'd afar,
And brav'd the mighty monarchs of the world.

"My patriot son fills an untimely grave !"
With accents wild and lifted arms—she cried ;
"Low lies the hand that oft was stretch'd to save,
Low lies the heart that swell'd with honest pride.

"A weeping country joins a widow's tear ;
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry ;
The drooping arts surround their patron's bier ;
And grateful science heaves the heart-felt sigh !

"I saw my sons resume their ancient fire ;
I saw fair Freedom's blossoms richly blow :
But ah ! how hope is born but to expire !
Relentless fate has laid their guardian low.

"My patriot falls, but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name .
No ; every muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.

"And I will join a mother's tender cares,
Thro' future times to make his virtues last ;
That distant years may boast of other Blairs !"—
She said, and vanish'd with the sweeping blast.

[Sir James Hunter Blair was Lord Provost of Edinburgh from Oct. 1; to Oct. 1786, and "old Provost" in 1786-87. His death happened on July 1787, while in the prime of life and usefulness; and it was with

nal feeling that Burns penned the above tribute to his memory. He forwarded a copy to his friend Mr Robert Aiken of Ayr, with these words appended:—"My honored friend, the melancholy occasion of the foregoing poem affects not only individuals, but a country. That I have lost a friend without repeating after Caledonia."

TO MISS FERRIER,

ENCLOSING THE ELEGY ON SIR J. H. BLAIR.

NAE heathen name shall I prefix,
 Frae Pindus or Parnassus ;
 Auld Reekie dings * them a' to sticks,
 For rhyme-inspiring lasses.

Jove's tunefu' dochters three times three
 Made Homer deep their debtor ;
 But, gien the body half an e'e,
 Nine Ferriers wad done better !

Last day my mind was in a bog,
 Down George's Street I stoited ; †
 A creeping cauld prosaic fog
 My very senses doited. ‡

Do what I dought § to set her free,
 My saul lay in the mire ;
 Ye turned a neuk—I saw your e'e—
 She took the wing like fire !

The mournfu' sang I here enclose,
 In gratitude I send you,
 And pray, in rhyme as weel as prose,
 A' gude things may attend you !

The above lines were addressed to a sister of Miss Ferrier, the distinguished novelist, on the cover which enclosed a copy of the preceding

* beats

† stumbled.

‡ benumbed.

§ could.

poem. Mr James Ferrier, W.S., father of these ladies, resided in Geo Street, Edinburgh, a few doors west of St Andrew's Church. Lockhart refers to him as one of Sir Walter Scott's brethren at the Clerk's table the Court of Session. The poet arrived in Edinburgh from Ayrshire 7th August, and shortly thereafter finished his *Elegy on the death of Blair*.]

IMPROMPTU ON CARRON IRON WORKS.

WE cam na here to view your warks,
 In hopes to be mair wise,
 But only, lest we gang to hell,
 It may be nae surprise:
 But when we tirl'd at your door
 Your porter dought na hear us;
 Sae may, shou'd we to Hell's yetts come,
 Your billy Satan sair us !

[From the 7th of August, when the poet arrived in Edinburgh, after three months absence, to the 25th of that month, he lodged in the house of William Nicol, teacher; and with that gentleman he set out in a chaise, way of Linlithgow, Falkirk, and Stirling, on a northern tour which lasted three weeks. The travellers zigzagged a little on the route between the two latter places, in hope of seeing the celebrated iron works of Carron, but the day being a Sunday, they were disappointed of admission. They consoled themselves with a rest at the Inn; and Burns, with his diamond pen, wrote the above lines on a window there.]

WRITTEN BY SOMEBODY ON THE WINDOW OF AN INN AT STIRLING, ON SEEING THE ROYAL PALACE IN RUIN.

HERE Stuarts once in glory reigned,
 And laws for Scotland's weal ordained;
 But now unroof'd their palace stands,
 Their sceptre's sway'd by other hands;
 Fallen indeed, and to the earth

Whence grovelling reptiles take their birth.
 The injured Stuart line is gone,
 A race outlandish fills their throne ;
 An idiot race, to honour lost ;
 Who know them best despise them most.

The travellers arrived at Stirling on Sunday, 26th August. Next morning, the poet left Nicol there, and proceeded alone on horseback, to visit the relatives of his friend Gavin Hamilton, at Harvieston, several miles eastward on the banks of the Devon. He returned to Stirling at night, and the next day the tour was resumed.

The above lines therefore were in all probability inscribed on the Sunday morning. They soon gave rise to considerable public excitement, and were the subject of animadversions in the newspapers, and elsewhere. A few months later, when he waited upon influential gentry in regard to his Excise duties, this trifle was revived against him. In one of his letters to Clarinda in January 1788, he thus writes :—"I was questioned like a child about my verses, and blamed and schooled for my inscription on the Stirling window." Clarinda in answer says—"I'm half glad you were school'd about the Inscription ; 'twill be a lesson, I hope, in future. Clarinda would have lectured on it before, if she durst."

Lockhart remarks, that Burns must have composed these lines *after* *her* ; and adds, that "the poetry, as well as the sentiment, 'smells of the poet's shop.' The last couplet was indeed an outrage which no political justice could have made a gentleman approve."]

THE POET'S REPLY TO THE THREAT OF A CENSORIOUS CRITIC.

My imprudent lines were answered, very petulantly, by *somebody*, I believe, a Rev. Mr. Hamilton. In a MS., where I met the answer, I wrote below :—

With Esop's lion, Burns says, sore I feel
 Each other blow, but d-mn that ass's heel !

It was the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, minister of the parish of Gladsmuir in West Lothian, to whom Burns here refers. His answer to the "Stirling Inscription" was contained in a sonnet of fourteen lines ending thus :—

"These few rash lines will damn thy name,
 And blast thy hopes of future fame."]

THE LIBELLER'S SELF-REPROOF.

RASH mortal, and slanderous poet, thy name
 Shall no longer appear in the records of Fame ;
 Dost not know that old Mansfield, who writes like t
 Bible,
 Says, the more 'tis a truth, sir, the more 'tis a libel !

[Burns does not enter this in his own record of the affair, given in the preceding articles : the authenticity of the lines is therefore very doubtful. They are probably Cunningham's own ; for we are not aware that they were ever seen till he published them. His story concerning them is as follows :—"The poet seems not to have been very sensible at the time of his impudence ; for some one said, 'Burns, this will do you no good !'—'I shall reprove myself,' he said, and wrote these aggravating words."

On a subsequent visit to Stirling with Dr Adair, who furnished Dr Cunningham with an account of the journey, his fellow-traveller thus refers to the Stirling inscription :—"The poet's indignation had vented itself in some imprudent, but not unpoetical lines, which had given much offence, which he took this opportunity of erasing, by breaking the pane of window at the inn on which they were written."]

VERSES WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL

OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE, IN THE PARLOUR OF THE
 INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.

ADMIRING Nature in her wildest grace,
 These northern scenes with weary feet I trace ;
 O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
 Th' abodes of covey'd grouse and timid sheep,
 My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
 Till fam'd Breadalbane opens to my view.—
 The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
 The woods, wild-scatter'd, clothe their ample sides ;
 Th' outstretching lake, imbosomed 'mong the hills,
 The eye with wonder and amazement fills ;
 The Tay meand'ring sweet in infant pride,
 The palace rising on his verdant side,

The lawns wood-fring'd in Nature's native taste,
 The hillocks dropt in Nature's careless haste,
 The arches striding o'er the new-born stream,
 The village glittering in the noontide beam—
 * * * *

Poetic ardors in my bosom swell,
 Lone wand'ring by the hermit's mossy cell ;
 The sweeping theatre of hanging woods,
 Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods —
 * * * *

Here Poesy might wake her heav'n-taught lyre,
 And look through Nature with creative fire ;
 Here, to the wrongs of Fate half reconcil'd,
 Misfortune's lighten'd steps might wander wild ;
 And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
 Find balm to soothe her bitter rankling wounds :
 Here heart-struck Grief might heav'nward stretch her
 scan,
 And injur'd Worth forget and pardon man.
 * * * *

[The poet and Mr Nicol arrived at this beautiful spot in the course of Wednesday, 29th August. The note in the Journal is simply "Taymouth—scribed in rhyme—meet the Hon. Charles Townshend." The truthfulness of Burns's description will be felt by all who know the locality.]

SONG.—THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.

Chor.—Bonie lassie, will ye go,
 Will ye go, will ye go,
 Bonie lassie, will ye go
 To the birks of Aberfeldy !

Now Simmer blinks on flowery braes,
 And o'er the crystal streamlets plays ;

Come let us spend the lightsome days,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

The little birdies blythely sing,
While o'er their heads the hazels hing,
Or lightly flit on wanton wing,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's,
The foamy stream deep-roaring fa's,
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws—
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,
White o'er the linns the burnie pours,
And rising, weets wi' misty showers
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

Let Fortune's gifts at random flee,
They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me ;
Supremely blest wi' love and thee,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

["I composed these stanzas standing under the Falls of Moness, near Aberfeldy." From the journal of his Highland tour in 1787, we learn that this was on Thursday, 30th August. The beautiful air to which it was composed was printed by Playford, so early as in 1657, as a "Scotch Ayre. Burns's chorus corresponds entirely with that of the old song to which it was sung—"The birks of Abergeldy"—the words of which are quite in the nursery-style, thus—

"Ye shall get a gown of silk, a gown of silk, a gown of silk,
Ye shall get a gown of silk, and coat of calimanco.")

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER
TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

My lord, I know, your noble ear
Woe ne'er assails in vain ;
Embolden'd thus, I beg you'll hear
Your humble slave complain,
How saucy Phœbus' scorching beams,
In flaming summer-pride,
Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
And drink my crystal tide.¹

The lightly-jumpin, glowrin * trouts,
That thro' my waters play,
If, in their random, wanton spouts,
They near the margin stray ;
If, hapless chance ! they linger lang,
I'm scorching up so shallow,
They're left the whitening stanes amang,
In gasping death to wallow.

Last day I grat † wi' spite and teen, ‡
As poet Burns came by,
That, to a bard, I should be seen
Wi' half my channel dry ;
A panegyric rhyme, I ween,
Ev'n as I was, he shor'd § me ;
But had I in my glory been,
He, kneeling, wad ador'd me.

Here, foaming down the skelvy rocks,
In twisting strength I rin ;

* staring.

† wept.

‡ vexation.

§ promised.

Bruar Falls, in Athole, are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful ; but
the effect is much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs.—*R. B.*

There, high my boiling torrent smokes,
 Wild-roaring o'er a linn : *
 Enjoying large each spring and well,
 As Nature gave them me,
 I am, altho' I say't mysel,
 Worth gaun a mile to see.

Would then my noble master please
 To grant my highest wishes,
 He'll shade my banks wi' tow'ring trees,
 And bonie spreading bushes.
 Delighted doubly then, my lord,
 You'll wander on my banks,
 And listen mony a grateful bird
 Return you tuneful thanks.

The sober lav'rock,† warbling wild,
 Shall to the skies aspire ;
 The gowdspink,‡ Music's gayest child,
 Shall sweetly join the choir ;
 The blackbird strong, the lintwhite § clear,
 The mavis || mild and mellow ;
 The robin pensive Autumn cheer,
 In all her locks of yellow.

This too, a covert shall ensure,
 To shield them from the storm ;
 And coward maukin ¶ sleep secure,
 Low in her grassy form :
 Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
 To weave his crown of flow'rs ;
 Or find a shelt'ring, safe retreat,
 From prone-descending show'rs.

And here, by sweet, endearing stealth,
 Shall meet the loving pair,

* cascade.

† lark.

‡ goldfinch.

§ linnet.

|| thrush.

¶ hare.

Despising worlds, with all their wealth,
As empty idle care ;
The flow'rs shall vie in all their charms,
The hour of heav'n to grace ;
And birks extend their fragrant arms
To screen the dear embrace.

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoking, dewy lawn,
And misty mountain grey ;
Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
Mild-chequering thro' the trees,
Rave to my darkly dashing stream,
Hoarse-swelling on the breeze.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-bending in the pool,
Their shadows' wat'ry-bed :
Let fragrant birks, in woodbines drest,
My craggy cliffs adorn ;
And, for the little songster's nest,
The close embow'ring thorn.

So may, old Scotia's darling hope,
Your little angel band¹
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
Their honour'd native land !
So may, thro' Albion's farthest ken,
To social-flowing glasses,
The grace be—"Athole's honest men,
And Athole's bonie lasses !"

Besides the younger sons, Edward and Robert, this "little angel band" consisted of Lady Charlotte, aged twelve, afterwards Lady Menzies of St. Menzies ; Lady Amelia, seven years old, afterwards Viscountess Atholl ; and Lady Elizabeth, an infant of five months, afterwards Lady Margaret Murray of Lanrick.

[Burns, in the course of his tour with Mr Nicol, stopped at Blair-Athole after a ride up the Tummel, on the evening of Friday, 31st August. His entry in his Journal is: "Sup with the Duchess—easy and happy from the manners of the family—confirmed in my good opinion of my friend Walker. It was happily arranged that Mr Nicol should be temptingly engaged in his favourite amusement of fishing, while the poet was prevailed on to spend two days with the Duke's family, and the visitors who then happened to be at Blair. The Saturday and Sunday (1st and 2nd September) which he passed there, he afterwards declared were the happiest days in his life. The poem which forms the text is inserted in the Glenriddell MSS. and the following note is appended in the poet's autograph:—"God, who knows all things, knows how my heart aches with the throes of gratitude, whenever I recollect my reception at the noble house of Athole."

The poet's Journal of date Sept. 1st thus gives a catalogue of the company he mixed with:—"General Murray; Captain Murray, an honest tar; William Murray, an honest, worthy man, but tormented with the hypochondria; Mrs Graham, *belle et aimable*; Miss Cathcart; Mrs Murray painter; Mrs King; Duchess and fine family, the Marquis, Lords James Edward, and Robert; Ladies Charlotte, Emilia, and Children—Dance Sup; Mr Graham of Fintry." The Duchess of Athole was a daughter of Lord Cathcart: the beautiful and amiable Mrs Graham referred to was not the wife of Mr Graham of Fintry, but Mary Cathcart, sister of the Duchess, and wife of Thomas Graham of Balgowan, afterwards Lord Lynedoch—"the gallant Graham" who achieved a deathless fame at Barossa. His beautiful wife predeceased him, in 1794; but her portrait "The Honourable Mrs Graham," by Gainsborough, is now one of the gems of our National Gallery in Edinburgh. The hero survived till 1843.]

LINES ON THE FALL OF FYERS, NEAR LOCH-NESS.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL ON THE SPOT.

AMONG the heathy hills and ragged woods
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods;
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro' a shapeless breach, his stream resounds
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear, astonished, rends.

¹ "Dec. 5, 1790. Died, at London, Jane, Duchess of Athole, daughter to the late, and sister to the present, Lord Cathcart.—Married to the Duke of Athole, Dec. 26, 1774. Left four sons and four daughters."—*Scots Magazine*

im-seen, through rising mists and ceaseless show'rs,
 he hoary cavern, wide surrounding lours :
 ill thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
 and still, below, the horrid caldron boils—

* * * * *

The poet visited Foyers on Wednesday, 5th September. After returning from his drive to the Falls, he dined by appointment with William Esq., afterwards Provost of Inverness, who had a party to meet him. It is remembered that, although he spoke rapturously of the High-cenery, he seemed in rather a silent and thoughtful mood throughout the evening.

Professor John Wilson produced a prose description of the scene sketched by Burns in the foregoing vigorous couplets, which has been reckoned magnificent "by some, and "extravagant" by others. Take the following specimen:—"That cataract, if descending on a cathedral, would shatter the pile into a million fragments. But it meets the black foundations of the cliff, and flies up to the starless heaven in a storm of spray. . . . The solid globe of earth quakes through her entrails. . . . Has some hill-curst its barrier? For, what a world of waters comes now tumbling into the abyss! Niagara! hast thou a fiercer roar? Listen, and you think these are momentary pauses of the thunder, filled up with goblin groans! Were military music bands of the army of Britain would here be dumb as the trumpet, cymbal, and the great drum!"

The eloquent writer of the above passage criticises Burns's talent for emotion, thus:—"Seldom setting himself to describe visual objects, but when he is under strong emotion, he seems to have taken considerable pains when he did, to produce something striking; and though he never fails on such occasions to do so, yet he is sometimes ambitious over much, and though never feeble, becomes bombastic, as in his lines on the Fall of Foyers:

'And viewless Echo's ear astonished rends.'"

Who humbly think that the beautiful idea presented in that line does not overstep the modesty of Nature," under the circumstances. The one line of Burns suggests all that Christopher North has so well said in his four volumes of Blackwood.]

EPIGRAM ON PARTING WITH A KIND HOST IN THE HIGHLANDS.

WHEN Death's dark stream I ferry o'er,
 (A time that surely shall come),
 In Heav'n itself I'll ask no more,
 Than just a Highland welcome.

STRATHALLAN'S LAMENT.

THICKEST night, surround my dwelling !
 Howling tempests, o'er me rave !
 Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
 Roaring by my lonely cave !
 Crystal streamlets gently flowing,
 Busy haunts of base mankind,
 Western breezes softly blowing,
 Suit not my distracted mind.

In the cause of Right engaged,
 Wrongs injurious to redress,
 Honor's war we strongly waged,
 But the heavens deny'd success,
 Ruin's wheel has driven o'er us,
 Not a hope that dare attend,
 The wide world is all before us—
 But a world without a friend.

[These words are supposed to be descriptive of the feelings of James Drummond, Viscount of Strathallan, who, after his father's death at Culloden, escaped with several of his countrymen to France, where he died.]

CASTLE GORDON.

STREAMS that glide in orient plains,
 Never bound by Winter's chains ;
 Glowing here on golden sands,
 There immixed with foulest stains
 From Tyranny's empurpled hands :
 These, their richly gleaming waves,
 I leave to tyrants and their slaves ;
 Give me the stream that sweetly laves
 The banks by Castle Gordon.

Spicy forests, ever gay,
 Shading from the burning ray
 Hapless wretches sold to toil ;
 Or the ruthless native's way,
 Bent on slaughter, blood, and spoil :
 Woods that ever verdant wave,
 I leave the tyrant and the slave ;
 Give me the groves that lofty brave
 The storms, by Castle Gordon.

Wildly here without control,
 Nature reigns and rules the whole ;
 In that sober pensive mood,
 Dearest to the feeling soul,
 She plants the forest, pours the flood :
 Life's poor day I'll musing rave,
 And find at night a sheltering cave,
 Where waters flow and wild woods wave,
 By bonie Castle Gordon.

The poet arrived at Gordon Castle on Friday, 7th September. The entry in his Journal is as follows:—"Cross the Spey to Fochabers—fine place, worthy of the noble, the polite, the generous proprietor—Dine—company, Duke and Duchess, Ladies Charlotte and Madeline; Colonel Percumbie and Lady, Mr Gordon and Mr —, a clergyman, a venerable, aged figure, and Mr Hoy, a clergyman too, I suppose—pleasant, open manner the Duke makes me happier than ever great man did—noble, princely; mild, condescending, and affable, gay, and kind—the Duchess charming, pretty, and sensible—God bless them!"

SONG.—LADY ONLIE, HONEST LUCKY.

Tune—"The Ruffian's Rant."

A THE lads o' Thorniebank,
 When they gae to the shore o' Bucky,*
 They'll step in an' tak a pint
 Wi' Lady Onlie, honest lucky.

* Buchan.

Chorus.—Lady Onlie, honest lucky,*
 Brews gude ale at shore o' Bucky;
 I wish her sale for her gude ale,
 The best on a' the shore o' Bucky.

Her house sae bien,† her curch ‡ sae clean,
 I wat she is a dainty chuckie ;§
 And cheery blinks the ingle-gleede ||
 O' Lady Onlie, honest lucky.
 Lady Onlie, &c.

[This song seems to have been inspired at one or other of the halting places on the route between Fochabers and Aberdeen, sketched in the *perth Journal* thus:—"Sat., 8 Sep. Breakfast at Banff—Improvements over the face of the country Pleasant ride along the shore—country almost wild again between Banff and Newbyth, quite wild as we come through Buchan to Old Deer."]

THENIEL MENZIES' BONIE MARY.

Air—"The Ruffian's Rant," or *Roy's Wife*.

IN comin by the brig o' Dye,
 At Darlet we a blink ¶ did tarry ;
 As day was dawin in the sky,
 We drank a health to bonie Mary.

Chorus.--Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary,
 Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary,
 Charlie Grigor tint ** his plaidie,
 Kissin' Theniel's bonie Mary.

Her een sae bright, her brow say white,
 Her haffet locks †† as brown's a berry ;
 And ay they dimpl't wi' a smile,
 The rosy cheeks o' bonie Mary.
 Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary, &c.

* kindly gossip.

§ well-conditioned hen.

** lost.

† snug.

|| fireside blaze.

†† side locks.

‡ kerchief round the head.

¶ short while

We lap an' danc'd the lee-lang * day,
Till piper lads were wae and weary ;
But Charlie gat the spring to pay,
For kissin Theniel's bonie Mary.
Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary, &c.

[The localities mentioned in the opening stanza are in northern Aberdeen-
e; and probably the effusion celebrates some incident on the tour.]

THE BONIE LASS OF ALBANY.

Tune—" Mary's Dream."

My heart is wae, and unco wae,
To think upon the raging sea,
That roars between her gardens green
An' the bonie Lass of Albany.

This lovely maid's of royal blood
That rulèd Albion's kingdoms three,
But oh, alas ! for her bonie face,
They've wrang'd the Lass of Albany.

In the rolling tide of spreading Clyde
There sits an isle of high degree,
And a town of fame whose princely name
Should grace the Lass of Albany.¹

But there's a youth, a witless youth,
That fills the place where she should be ;
We'll send him o'er to his native shore,
And bring our ain sweet Albany.

Alas the day, and woe the day,
A false usurper wan the gree,†

* live-long.

† supremacy.

Rothsay, the county town of the Isle of Bute, gave the title Duke of
thesay to the eldest sons of the Kings of Scotland.

Who now commands the towers and lands —
The royal right of Albany.

We'll daily pray, we'll nightly pray,
On bended knees most fervently,
The time may come, with pipe an' drum
We'll welcome hame fair Albany.

[Burns and his Jacobite friend Nicol arrived in Edinburgh, after a tour of twenty-two days, on Sunday, 16th September. While on their route the newspapers had announced the fact that Prince Charles Stuart (Pretender) who had no legitimate issue, had made a formal declaration of his marriage with Clementina Walkinshaw, who had borne him a daughter. The latter was styled "Duchess of Albany," and she was legitimated by the Parliament of Paris, by a deed registered September 6, 1787.]

ON SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL IN LOCH-TURIT.

A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OUGHTERTY

"This was the production of a solitary forenoon's walk from Oughterty House. I lived there, the guest of Sir William Murray, for two or three weeks, and was much flattered by my hospitable reception. What a pity that the mere emotions of gratitude are so impotent in this world! How lucky that, as we are told, they will be of some avail in the world to come."
—*R. B., Glenriddell MSS.*

WHY, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your wat'ry haunt forsake?
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly?
Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties?—
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free:
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton lave;
Or, beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billow's shock.

Conscious, blushing for our race,
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace.
Man, your proud usurping foe,
Would be lord of all below:
Plumes himself in freedom's pride,
Tyrant stern to all beside.

The eagle, from the cliffy brow,
Marking you his prey below,
In his breast no pity dwells,
Strong necessity compels:
But Man, to whom alone is giv'n
A ray direct from pitying Heav'n,
Glories in his heart humane—
And creatures for his pleasure slain!

In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wand'ring swains,
Where the mossy riv'let strays,
Far from human haunts and ways;
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.

Or, if man's superior might
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his pow'rs you scorn;
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave.

The beautiful lines in the text have been frequently quoted as illustrative of Burns's tender sympathy with the lower animals. Loch Turrit (the natives pronounce it "Turrit") is in the midst of a wild valley among the hills behind Ochertyre House. Chambers expresses his opinion "that Burns did not ride across the Muir of Ochil merely to spend a few luxurious days in a stocratic society, still less to view scenery which he had passed over so

lately as August" preceding. He explains that Sir William Murray Ochtertyre was cousin to Mr Graham of Fintry, a Commissioner of Excise whom the poet had met at Blair, and suggests that the Excise scheme which Burns unfortunately cherished so much, was chiefly in his eye when he undertook that October journey.]

BLYTHE WAS SHE.

Tune—"Andro and his Cutty Gun."

Chorus.—Blythe, blythe and merry was she,
Blythe was she but and ben ; *
Blythe by the banks of Earn,
And blythe in Glenturit glen.

By Oughtertyre grows the aik,
On Yarrow banks the birken shaw ; †
But Phemie was a bonier lass
Than braes o' Yarrow ever saw.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

Her looks were like a flow'r in May,
Her smile was like a simmer morn :
She trippèd by the banks o' Earn,
As light's a bird upon a thorn.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

Her bonie face it was as meek
As ony lamb upon a lea ;
The evening sun was ne'er sae sweet,
As was the blink o' Phemie's e'e.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

The Highland hills I've wander'd wide,
As o'er the Lawlands, I hae been ;

* throughout the house.

† birch wood.

But Phemie was the blythest lass
That ever trode the dewy green.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

The subject of this lyric was Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, a cousin of Sir Wm. Murray of Ochtertyre, and then about eighteen years old. She was subsequently married to Mr Smythe of Methven, one of the judges of the Court of Session. Even at that early age, she had acquired celebrity in the district for her beauty, and was called "The Flower of Strathmore." Mr Smythe in after-life mentioned to a friend that she "remembered of him reciting the poem on Scaring the Wildfowl, one evening after supper, and that he pronounced the concluding lines with great energy."]

A ROSE-BUD BY MY EARLY WALK.

A ROSE-BUD by my early walk,
Adown a corn-inclosed bawk,*
Sae gently bent its thorny stalk,
All on a dewy morning.
Ere twice the shades o' dawn are fled,
In a' its crimson glory spread,
And drooping rich the dewy head,
It scents the early morning.

Within the bush her cover'd nest
A little linnet fondly prest;
The dew sat chilly on her breast,
Sae early in the morning.
She soon shall see her tender brood,
The pride, the pleasure o' the wood,
Amang the fresh green leaves bedew'd,
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jeany fair,
On trembling string or vocal air,

* footpath through a cornfield.

Shall sweetly pay the tender care
 That tents * thy early morning.
 So thou, sweet Rose-bud, young and gay,
 Shalt beauteous blaze upon the day,
 And bless the parent's evening ray
 That watch'd thy early morning.

[On 20th October Burns came back from Ochertyre and the banks of the Devon with a cold contracted in the latter stages of his journey, which confined him pretty closely to the house for some days of Mr Wm. Cruickshank, a fellow-teacher with Mr Nicol, in the High School of Edinburgh. His time was chiefly occupied in composing songs for the second volume of Johnson's *Museum*, and hearing Miss Cruickshank play the melodies on the pianoforte. Professor Walker thus refers to this matter:—"About the end of October I called for him at the house of a friend whose daughter, then not more than twelve, was a considerable proficient in music. I found him seated by the harpsichord of this young lady, listening with the keenest interest to his own verses, which she sang and accompanied, and adjusting them to the music by repeated trials of the effect. In this occupation he was so totally absorbed, that it was difficult to draw his attention from her for a moment."]

EPITAPH FOR MR W. CRUICKSHANK.

HONEST Will to Heaven's away
 And many shall lament him ;
 His faults they a' in Latin lay,
 In English nane e'er kent them.

[Mr Cruickshank's house, where Burns lodged from 16th September 1787 to 18th February 1788, was in James' Square, top flat of the corner stair, No. 30, and the window of the poet's room looked from the gable-end into the green plot behind the Register House.]

SONG.—THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.

These verses were composed on a charming girl, Miss Charlotte Hamilton, who is now (1793) married to James M'Kitrick Adair, Esq., physician. She is sister to my worthy friend, Gavin Hamilton of Mauchline, and was

* watches.

on the banks of Ayr; but was, at the time I wrote these lines, residing at Harvieston in Clackmannanshire, on the romantic banks of the little river Devon.—*R. B., Glenriddel Notes.*

How pleasant the banks of the clear winding Devon,
 With green spreading bushes and flow'rs blooming fair !
 Out the boniest flow'r on the banks of the Devon
 Was once a sweet bud on the braes of the Ayr.
 Would be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,
 In the gay rosy morn, as it bathes in the dew ;
 And gentle the fall of the soft vernal shower,
 That steals on the evening each leaf to renew !

spare the dear blossom, ye orient breezes,
 With chill hoary wing as ye usher the dawn ;
 And far be thou distant, thou reptile that seizes
 The verdure and pride of the garden or lawn !
 Let Bourbon exult in his gay gilded lilies,
 And England triumphant display her proud rose :
 Fairer than either adorns the green vallies,
 Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

[The poet paid a visit to Harvieston on Monday, 27th August, and again, on two different occasions, within two months thereafter. He gave an account of the first of those visits, in a letter to Mr Gavin Hamilton, in which he writes very warmly of Charlotte's beauty. At the period of the two latter visits, Miss Margaret Chalmers, a cousin of Charlotte, was also residing at Harvieston. Burns had been introduced to Miss Chalmers in Edinburgh, and she afterwards was one of his most cherished confidantes and correspondents. Writing to her on September 26th, 1787, he says :— "I am determined to pay Charlotte a poetic compliment, if I could hit on the glorious old Scotch air. You will see a small attempt on a shred of paper inclosed ; but though Dr Blacklock commended it very highly, I am not just satisfied with it myself. . . . You and Charlotte have given me pleasure—permanent pleasure 'which the world cannot give nor take away,' and which I hope will outlast the heavens and the earth." In a later letter he writes :—"Talking of Charlotte, I have, to the best of my power, paid her a poetic compliment now completed. . . . I won't say the poetry is first-rate, though I am convinced it is very well ; and, what is not always the case with compliments to ladies, it is not only sincere but just."]

BRAVING ANGRY WINTER'S STORMS.

Tune—"Neil Gow's Lament for Abercairny."

WHERE, braving angry winter's storms,
 The lofty Ochils rise,
 Far in their shade my Peggy's charms
 First blest my wondering eyes ;
 As one who by some savage stream
 A lonely gem surveys,
 Astonish'd, doubly marks it beam
 With art's most polish'd blaze.

Blest be the wild, sequester'd shade,
 And blest the day and hour,
 Where Peggy's charms I first survey'd,
 When first I felt their pow'r !
 The tyrant Death, with grim controul,
 May seize my fleeting breath ;
 But tearing Peggy from my soul
 Must be a stronger death.

[The subject of this lyric was Margaret Chalmers, who, about a year after it was composed, became the wife of Lewis Hay, Esq., Banker Edinburgh. She became a widow within four years after the death of Burns. If ever Burns thought of being married to an "Edinburgh Belle," Peggy Chalmers was the one his heart was set upon. Thomas Campbell the poet, who was a familiar visitor of Mrs Lewis Hay, during her widowhood, averred that she had admitted to him that Burns made her a serious proposal of marriage.]

SONG.—MY PEGGY'S CHARMS.

MY Peggy's face, my Peggy's form,
 The frost of hermit Age might warm ;
 My Peggy's worth, my Peggy's mind,
 Might charm the first of human kind.

I love my Peggy's angel air,
Her face so truly heavenly fair,
Her native grace, so void of art,
But I adore my Peggy's heart.

The lily's hue, the rose's dye,
The kindling lustre of an eye ;
Who but owns their magic sway ?
Who but knows they all decay !

The tender thrill, the pitying tear,
The generous purpose nobly dear,
The gentle look that rage disarms--
These are all Immortal charms.

[This other poetic tribute to the "immortal charms" of Peggy Chalmers, is intended to appear along with the one immediately preceding, in Johnson's second volume, but was not included in that collection till many years after the poet's death.]

THE YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER.

Tune—"Morag."

LOUD blaw the frosty breezes,
The snaws the mountains cover ;
Like winter on me seizes,
Since my young Highland rover
Far wanders nations over.
Where'er he go, where'er he stray,
May Heaven be his warden ;
Return him safe to fair Strathspey,
And bonie Castle-Gordon !

The trees now naked groaning,
Shall soon wi' leaves be hinging,
The birdies dowie moaning,
Shall a' be blythely singing,
And every flower be springing ;

Sae I'll rejoice the lee-lang day,
When (by his mighty Warden)
My youth's return'd to fair Strathspey,
And bonie Castle-Gordon.

[Who the "Young Highland Rover" of this song is, does not clearly appear. But Stenhouse says that the illusion is to the misfortunes of the "Young Chevalier," who, before the disasters of Culloden, was sometimes entertained at Castle-Gordon.]

BIRTHDAY ODE FOR 31ST DECEMBER 1781

AFAR the illustrious Exile roams,
Whom kingdoms on this day should hail ;
An inmate in the casual shed,
On transient pity's bounty fed,
Haunted by busy memory's bitter tale !
Beasts of the forest have their savage homes,
But He, who should imperial purple wear,
Owns not the lap of earth where rests his royal head !
His wretched refuge, dark despair,
While ravening wrongs and woes pursue,
And distant far the faithful few
Who would his sorrows share.

False flatterer, Hope, away !
Nor think to lure us as in days of yore :
We solemnize this sorrowing natal day,¹
To prove our loyal truth—we can no more,
And owning Heaven's mysterious sway,
Submissive, low adore.
Ye honored, mighty Dead,

¹ Precisely one month after this Jubilee meeting, the Prince died at Rome.

Who nobly perished in the glorious cause,
Your KING, your Country, and her laws,
From great DUNDEE, who smiling Victory led,
And fell a Martyr in her arms,
What breast of northern ice but warms !)
To bold BALMERINO'S undying name,
Whose soul of fire, lighted at Heaven's high flame,
Deserves the proudest wreath departed heroes claim :
Not unrevenged your fate shall lie,
It only lags, the fatal hour,
Your blood shall, with incessant cry,
Awake at last th' unsparing Power ;
As from the cliff, with thundering course,
The snowy ruin smokes along
With doubling speed and gathering force,
It deep it, crushing, whelms the cottage in the vale ;
So Vengeance' arm, ensanguin'd, strong,
Shall with resistless might assail,
Usurping Brunswick's pride shall lay,
And STEWART'S wrongs and yours, with tenfold weight,
Repay.

PERDITION, baleful child of night !
Rise and revenge the injured right
Of STEWART'S royal race :
Lead on the unmuzzled hounds of hell,
Till all the frightened echoes tell
The blood-notes of the chase !
Full on the quarry point their view,
Full on the base usurping crew,
The tools of faction, and the nation's curse !
Hark how the cry grows on the wind ;
They leave the lagging gale behind,
Their savage fury, pityless, they pour ;
With murdering eyes already they devour ;
See Brunswick spent, a wretched prey,

His life one poor despairing day,
 Where each avenging hour still ushers in a worse
 Such havock, howling all abroad,
 Their utter ruin bring ;
 The base apostates to their GOD,
 Or rebels to their KING.

[Burns had been applied to by some members of a select club of Jacobins in and around the city to favour them with a birth-day Ode for a feast on 31st December, and, although he had no hope, perhaps no desire, present, he complied with the request.]

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT DUNDAS, E OF ARNISTON,

LATE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF SESSIONS

"I have two or three times in my life composed from the wish rather than from the impulse, but I never succeeded to any purpose. One of these times I shall ever remember with gnashing of teeth. 'Twas on the death of the late Lord President Dundas. My very worthy and respected friend Mr Alex. Wood, surgeon, urged me to pay a compliment in the way of a poem to his lordship's memory. Well, to work I went, and produced a few lines of elegiac verses, some of them I own rather common-place, and others rather hide-bound, but on the whole, though they were far from being in the best manner, they were tolerable, and would, by some, have been thought very clever. I wrote a letter which, however, was in my very best manner, and enclosing my poem: Mr Wood carried all together to Mr Solicitor Dundas, that then was, and not finding him at home, left the parcel for him. His Solicitorship never took the smallest notice of the letter, the poet never saw it. From that time, highly as I respect the talents of their family, I never see the name *Dundas* in the column of a newspaper, but my heart seems straitened for room in my bosom; and if I am obliged to write aloud a paragraph relating to one of them, I feel my forehead flush, and my lower lip quiver."—*Letter to Alex. Cunningham, 11th March 1791.*

LONE on the bleaky hills the straying flocks
 Shun the fierce storms among the sheltering rocks ;
 Down from the rivulets, red with dashing rains,
 The gathering floods burst o'er the distant plains ;
 Beneath the blast the leafless forests groan ;
 The hollow caves return a hollow moan.

'e hills, ye plains, ye forests, and ye caves,
'e howling winds, and wintry swelling waves !
Unheard, unseen, by human ear or eye,
Sad to your sympathetic glooms I fly ;
Where, to the whistling blast and water's roar,
Pale Scotia's recent wound I may deplore.

O heavy loss, thy country ill could bear !
A loss these evil days can ne'er repair !
Justice, the high vicegerent of her God,
Her doubtful balance eyed, and sway'd her rod :
Hearing the tidings of the fatal blow,
She sank, abandon'd to the wildest woe.

Wrongs, injuries, from many a darksome den,
Now, gay in hope, explore the paths of men :
See from his cavern grim Oppression rise,
And throw on Poverty his cruel eyes ;
Keen on the helpless victim see him fly,
And stifle, dark, the feebly-bursting cry :
Mark Ruffian Violence, distained with crimes,
Rousing elate in these degenerate times,
View unsuspecting Innocence a prey,
As guileful Fraud points out the erring way :
While subtle Litigation's pliant tongue
The life-blood equal sucks of Right and Wrong :
Hark, injur'd Want recounts th' unlisten'd tale,
And much-wrong'd Mis'ry pours th' unpitied wail !

Ye dark, waste hills, ye brown unsightly plains,
Congenial scenes, ye soothe my mournful strains :
Ye tempests, rage ! ye turbid torrents, roll !
Ye suit the joyless tenor of my soul.
Life's social haunts and pleasures I resign ;
Be nameless wilds and lonely wanderings mine,
To mourn the woes my country must endure—
That wound degenerate ages cannot cure.

SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

EXTEMPORE REPLY TO VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE
AUTHOR BY A LADY, UNDER THE SIGNATURE
"CLARINDA."

"Almighty love still reigns and revels in my bosom, and I am at moment ready to hang myself for a young Edinburgh widow, who has and wisdom more murderously fatal than the assassinating stiletto of a Sicilian bandit, or the poisoned arrow of the African savage. You may guess of her wit by the following verses which she sent me the other day."
—*Letter to Richard Brown, Dec. 30th. 1787.*

ON BURNS SAYING HE 'HAD NOTHING ELSE TO DO.'

When first you saw *Clarinda's* charms,
What rapture in your bosom grew !
Her heart was shut to Love's alarms,
But then—you'd nothing else to do.

Apollo oft had lent his harp,
But now 'twas strung from Cupid's bow ;
You sung—it reached *Clarinda's* heart—
She wish'd you'd nothing else to do.

Fair Venus smil'd, Minerva frown'd,
Cupid observed, the arrow flew :
Indifference (ere a week went round)
Show'd you had nothing else to do.

* * * * *

CHRISTMAS EVE.

(Signed)

CLARINDA

WHEN dear *Clarinda*, matchless fair,
First struck *Sylvander's* raptur'd view,
He gaz'd, he listened to despair,
Alas ! 'twas all he dared to do.

Love, from *Clarinda's* heavenly eyes,
Transfixed his bosom thro' and thro' ;
But still in Friendship's guarded guise,
For more the demon fear'd to do.

That heart, already more than lost,
The imp beleaguer'd all *perdue* ;

For frowning Honor kept his post—
To meet that frown he shrunk to do.

His pangs the Bard refused to own,
Tho' half he wish'd Clarinda knew ;
But Anguish wrung the unweeting groan—
Who blames what frantic Pain must do !

That heart, where motley follies blend,
Was sternly still to Honor true :
To prove Clarinda's fondest friend,
Was what a lover sure might do.

The Muse his ready quill employed,
No nearer bliss he could pursue ;
That bliss Clarinda cold deny'd—
“Send word by Charles how you do !”

The chill behest disarm'd his muse,
Till passion, all impatient grew :
He wrote, and hinted for excuse,
'Twas, 'cause “he'd nothing else to do.”

But by those hopes I have above !
And by those faults I dearly rue !
The deed, the boldest mark of love,
For thee, that deed I dare to do !

O could the Fates but name the price
Would bless me with your charms and you !
With frantic joy I'd pay it thrice,
If human art and power could do !

Then take. Clarinda, friendship's hand,
(Friendship, at least, I may avow ;)
And lay no more your chill command,—
I'll write, whatever I've to do.

SYLVANDER.

[The lady who corresponded with Burns under the Arcadian name "Clarinda" was Mrs Agnes (or Nancy) Craig, or M'Lehose, wife of James M'Lehose, a writer in Glasgow. She was born in the same year as the poet (1759), was married in 1776, deserted by her husband in 1780, removed to Edinburgh in 1782. When Burns formed her acquaintance, she had two surviving children, William, six years old, and Andrew, two years older. In person she was handsome, and cultivated the Muses a little.]

Burns first met her at the house of a Miss Nimmo, an intimate friend of the poet's heroine, Peggy Chalmers. Mrs M'Lehose resided in General Entry, Potterrow. She made the admission that she had long pressed Miss Nimmo to make her acquainted with Burns—"I had a presentiment (she said) that we would derive pleasure from the society of each other." The poet had fixed to leave for Ayrshire on Thursday, 13th of December, but had accepted an invitation to take tea at the house of Mrs M'Lehose on Saturday the 8th; but on the Friday night he met with an accident which detained him two months longer in the city. After several letters had passed between Burns and Mrs M'Lehose, in their own names, the lady, on Christmas Eve, addressed to him the verses contained in our head-note signed Clarinda; and from that date onward, a copious correspondence followed under the signatures, Sylvander and Clarinda.]

LOVE IN THE GUISE OF FRIENDSHIP.

YOUR friendship much can make me blest,
O why that bliss destroy !
Why urge the only, one request
You know I will deny !

Your thought, if Love must harbour there,
Conceal it in that thought ;
Nor cause me from my bosom tear
The very friend I sought.

[These two stanzas were written by Burns to complete a pretty canzone composed and sent to him by Clarinda.]

Talk not of Love ! it gives me pain,
For Love has been my foe :
He bound me in an iron chain,
And plung'd me deep in woe.

But Friendship's pure and lasting joys,
My heart was form'd to prove :

The worthy object be of those,
But never talk of Love.

The hand of Friendship I accept,
May Honor be our guard,
Virtue our intercourse direct,
Her smiles our dear reward."

GO ON, SWEET BIRD, AND SOOTHE MY CARE.

FOR thee is laughing Nature gay,
For thee she pours the vernal day ;
For me in vain is Nature drest,
While Joy's a stranger to my breast.

These lines were written by Burns to supplement a little song by Clarinda.

"HEARING A BLACKBIRD SING AT HEAD OF BRUNTSFIELD LINKS,
EDINBURGH."

"Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care,
Thy cheerful notes will hush despair ;
Thy tuneful warblings, void of art,
Thrill sweetly through my aching heart.

Now choose thy mate, and fondly love,
And all the charming transport prove ;
Whilst I, a love-lorn exile, live,
And rapture nor receive, nor give.

Those sweet emotions all enjoy,
Let Love and Song thy hours employ :
Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care,
Thy cheerful notes will hush despair."]

CLARINDA, MISTRESS OF MY SOUL.

CLARINDA, mistress of my soul,
The measur'd time is run !
The wretch beneath the dreary pole
So marks his latest sun.

To what dark cave of frozen night
Shall poor Sylvander hie ;

Depriv'd of thee, his life and light,
The sun of all his joy.

We part—but by these precious drops,
That fill thy lovely eyes,
No other light shall guide my steps,
Till thy bright beams arise !

She, the fair sun of all her sex,
Has blest my glorious day ;
And shall a glimmering planet fix
My worship to its ray ?

[These elegant stanzas were composed in anticipation of the author's approaching departure from Edinburgh. His injured limb was sufficiently restored to admit of his visiting Clarinda in a chair, or coach, during the first week of that month ; but the parting visit was deferred till past the middle of February.]

I'M O'ER YOUNG TO MARRY YET.

Chorus.—I'm o'er young, I'm o'er young,
I'm o'er young to marry yet ;
I'm o'er young, 'twad be a sin
To tak me frae my mammy yet.

I AM my mammy's ae bairn,
Wi' unco folk I weary, sir ;
And lying in a strange bed,
I'm fley'd it mak me eerie, sir.
I'm o'er young, &c.

Hallowmass is come and gane,
The nights are lang in winter, sir,
And you an' I in ae bed,
In trowth, I dare na venture, sir.
I'm o'er young, &c.

Fu' loud an' shill the frosty wind
Blaws thro' the leafless timmer, sir ;
But if ye come this gate again,
I'll aulder be gin simmer, sir.
I'm o'er young, &c.

TO THE WEAVER'S GIN YOU GO.

My heart was ance as blythe and free
As simmer days were lang ;
But a bonie, westlin weaver lad
Has gart me change my sang.

Chorus.—To the weaver's gin ye go, fair maids,
To the weaver's gin ye go ;
I rede you right, gang ne'er at night.
To the weaver's gin ye go.

My mither sent me to the town,
To warp a plaiden wab ;
But the weary, weary warpin o't
Has gart me sigh and sab.
To the weaver's, &c.

A bonie, westlin weaver lad
Sat working at his loom ;
He took my heart as wi' a net,
In every knot and thrum.
To the weaver's, &c.

I sat beside my warpin-wheel,
And ay I ca'd it roun' ;
But every shot and every knock,
My heart it gae a stoun.
To the weaver's, &c.

The moon was sinking in the west,
 Wi' visage pale and wan,
 As my bonie, westlin weaver lad
 Convoy'd me thro' the glen.
 To the weaver's, &c.

But what was said, or what was done,
 Shame fa' me gin I tell ;
 But Oh ! I fear the kintra soon
 Will ken as weel's mysel !
 To the weaver's, &c.

[Certain reports reached the poet in the early summer of 1786 concerning his Jean, who had been sent to Paisley to keep out of the poet's road, that she had been dancing at balls with a certain Robie Wilson, a weaver in the town.]

M'PHERSON'S FAREWELL.

Tune—"M'Pherson's Rant."

FAREWELL, ye dungeons dark and strong,
 The wretch's destinie !
 M'Pherson's time will not be long
 On yonder gallows-tree.

Chorus.—Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
 Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
 He play'd a spring, and danc'd it round
 Below the gallows-tree.*

O what is death but parting breath ?
 On many a bloody plain
 I've dared his face, and in this place
 I scorn him yet again !
 Sae rantingly, &c.

* He is said to have played the tune on his fiddle just before ascending the ladder which led him into eternity, and to have broken the instrument in contempt, because no sympathisers came to rescue him.

Untie these bands from off my hands,
 And bring to me my sword ;
 And there's no a man in all Scotland,
 But I'll brave him at a word.
 Sae rantingly, &c.

I've liv'd a life of sturt and strife ;
 I die by treacherie :
 It burns my heart I must depart,
 And not avengèd be.
 Sae rantingly, &c.

Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
 And all beneath the sky !
 May coward shame distain his name,
 The wretch that dare not die !
 Sae rantingly, &c.

[The above "grand lyric," as Lockhart has termed it, was one of the fruits of the poet's Highland Tour. That biographer says, "It is from this time that we must date Burns's ambition to transmit his own poetry to posterity, his eternal association with those exquisite airs which had hitherto, in far too many instances, been married to verses that did not deserve to be immortal." David Herd (v. i. p. 99) has preserved the original ballad concerning the execution of the daring freebooter into whose lips our poet has put these magnificent sentiments ; but nothing whatever has been borrowed by Burns from that old "dying speech." M'Pherson was condemned and hanged at Glasgow on the 16th of November 1700 ; and he is credited with having been an excellent performer on the violin, and composer of the "Rant," which bears his name.]

STAY MY CHARMER.

Gaelic Air—"The Black-haired Lad."

STAY my charmer, can you leave me !
 Cruel, cruel to deceive me ;
 Well you know how much you grieve me ;
 Cruel charmer, can you go !
 Cruel charmer, can you go !

By my love so ill-requited,
 By the faith you fondly plighted,
 By the pangs of lovers slighted,
 Do not, do not leave me so !
 Do not, do not leave me so !

[These lines were composed to suit a celebrated Gaelic melody with which the poet was smitten on hearing it sung in the course of his Highland excursion.]

SONG—MY HOGGIE.

WHAT will I do gin my Hoggie * die ?
 My joy, my pride, my Hoggie !
 My only beast, I had nae mae,
 And vow but I was vogie ! †
 The lee-lang night we watch'd the fauld,
 Me and my faithfu' doggie ;
 We heard nocht but the roaring linn,
 Amang the braes sae scroggie. ‡

 But the houlet § cry'd frae the castle wa',
 The blitter || frae the boggie ;
 The tod ¶ reply'd upon the hill,
 I trembled for my Hoggie.
 When day did daw, and cocks did crow,
 The morning it was foggie ;
 An unco tyke, ** lap o'er the dyke,
 And maist has kill'd my Hoggie !

[Cromek in his "Select Scottish Songs" remarked of this production:—"It is a silly subject treated sublimely. It has much of the fervour of the *Vision*." The poet's own note in the Glenriddell MSS. refers entirely to the tune, and is as follows:—"Dr Walker, who was minister of Moffat

* a young sheep before it has lost its first fleece.

† vain.

‡ rough with stunted bushes.

§ owl.

|| mire-snipe.

¶ fox.

** dog.

1772, and is now (1791) Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, told Mr Riddell the following anecdote concerning this air. He said that some gentlemen, riding a few years ago through Liddisdale, stopped at a hamlet consisting of a few houses, called Moss-paul, when they were struck with this tune, which an old woman, spinning on a rock at her door, was singing. All she could tell concerning it was, that she was taught it when a child, and it was called 'What will I do gin my Hoggie die?' No person, except a few females at Moss-paul, knew this fine old tune, which in all probability would have been lost, had not one of the gentlemen, who happened to have a flute with him, taken it down."]

RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING.

Tune—"M'Grigor of Roro's Lament."

I composed these verses on Miss Isabella M'Leod of Raza, alluding to her feelings on the death of her sister, and the still more melancholy death of her sister's husband, the late Earl of Loudoun, who shot himself out of sheer heart-break at some mortifications he suffered, owing to the deranged state of his finances.—*R. B.*, 1791.¹

RAVING winds around her blowing,
Yellow leaves the woodlands strowing,
By a river hoarsely roaring,
Isabella stray'd deploring—

"Farewell, hours that late did measure
Sunshine days of joy and pleasure;
Hail, thou gloomy night of sorrow,
Cheerless night that knows no morrow!

"O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering;
Chilly grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell despair my fancy seizes.

¹ The poet might have also referred to her father's recent death: "Dec. 16, 1786.—At Rasay, John M'Leod, Esq. of Rasay, aged 69;" and her brother's death: "July 20, 1787.—At Edinburgh, John M'Leod, Esq., youngest son of the late John M'Leod, of Rasay, Esq."—*Scots Mag.*

“ Life, thou soul of every blessing,
 Load to misery most distressing,
 Gladly how would I resign thee,
 And to dark oblivion join thee !”

This composition appears to have been suggested by a well-known sonnet of Gay's, beginning—

“ 'Twas when the seas were roaring with hollow blasts of wind,
 A damsel lay deploring, all on a rock reclined.”

Burns's opinion of the verses which form the text may be gathered from the following passage in one of his letters to Mrs Dunlop, shortly after he commenced farming at Ellisland :—“ I was yesterday at Mr Miller's house to dinner for the first time. My reception was quite to my mind ; from the lady of the house quite flattering In the course of conversation 'Johnson's Musical Museum' was talked of. We got a song on the harpsichord beginning 'Raving winds around her blowing.' The air was much admired : the lady of the house asked me whose were the words.—'Mir Madam—they are indeed my very best verses.' She took not the smallest notice of them ! I was going to make a New Testament quotation about 'Casting pearls,' but that would be too virulent, for the lady is actually a woman of sense and taste.”]

UP IN THE MORNING EARLY.

CAULD blaws the wind frae east to west,
 The drift is driving sairly ;
 Sae loud and shill 's I hear the blast—
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Chorus.—Up in the morning's no for me,
 Up in the morning early ;
 When a' the hills are cover'd wi' snaw
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
 A' day they fare but sparely ;
 And lang's the night frae e'en to morn—
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.
 Up in the morning's, &c.

[The beautiful air which belongs to this song is sufficient to recommend very indifferent words ; and yet these lines by Burns are in his best manner.]

the only thing to regret is that he did not extend it somewhat, for it is too short to satisfy the ear. Although the tune is truly Scotch, it has been popular in England for more than two hundred years. In 1652, John Hil-
published what he called a "Northern Catch" for three voices, and this
y tune is there adapted for the third voice. Some forty years thereafter,
Henry Purcell borrowed the same idea by composing a Birthday song for
Queen Mary (consort of William of Orange), in which this tune was made
serve for the bass part. It appears that the Queen had, in Purcell's
singing, when she grew tired of listening to some of his compositions,
frowned, and asked Mrs Arabella Hunt to cheer her with a Scotch song,
and accordingly she sung "Cauld and raw the wind doth blaw" to this
tune.]

HOW LONG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT.

How long and dreary is the night,
When I am frae my dearie !
I sleepless lye frae e'en to morn,
Tho' I were ne'er so weary :
I sleepless lye frae e'en to morn,
Tho' I were ne'er sae weary !

When I think on the happy days
I spent wi' you my dearie :
And now what lands between us lye,
How can I be but eerie !
And now what lands between us lye,
How can I be but eerie !

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
As ye were wae and weary !
It was na sae—ye glinted by,
When I was wi' my dearie !
It was na sae—ye glinted by,
When I was wi' my dearie !

[In October 1794, to gratify a *penchant* which George Thomson had for
the air "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen," the poet altered the structure of the
above exquisite song and cumbered it with an unnecessary chorus.]

HEY, THE DUSTY MILLER.

HEY, the dusty Miller,
And his dusty coat,
He will win a shilling,
Or he spend a groat:
Dusty was the coat,
Dusty was the colour,
Dusty was the kiss
That I gat frae the Miller.

Hey, the dusty Miller,
And his dusty sack;
Leeze me on the calling
Fills the dusty peck:
Fills the dusty peck,
Brings the dusty siller;
I wad gae my coatie
For the dusty Miller.

[It is impossible to say what portions of this song may belong to an old version of the same subject, as the ancient one seems not to exist in print. The poet's manuscript supplied to Johnson is still preserved, and corresponds exactly with the copy given in the *Museum*. The air is very lively and was in former days frequently played as a single hornpipe in dancing schools of Scotland.]

DUNCAN DAVIDSON.

THERE was a lass, they ca'd her Meg,
And she held o'er the moors to spin;
There was a lad that follow'd her,
They ca'd him Duncan Davison.
The moor was dreigh,* and Meg was skeigh,†
Her favour Duncan could na win;

* wearisome

† saucy.

For wi' the rock she wad him knock,
And ay she shook the temper-pin.

As o'er the moor they lightly foor,*
A burn was clear, a glen was green,
Upon the banks they eas'd their shanks,
And ay she set the wheel between :
But Duncan swoor a haly aith,
That Meg should be a bride the morn ;
Then Meg took up her spinnin-graith,
And flang them a' out o'er the burn.

We will big a wee, wee house,
And we will live like king and queen ;
Sae blythe and merry 's we will be,
When ye set by the wheel at e'en.
A man may drink, and no be drunk ;
A man may fight, and no be slain ;
A man may kiss a bonie lass,
And ay be welcome back again !

[These words to a favourite old dancing-tune were called by the name of : hero of the song. That the poet was familiar with the tune of Duncan Davidson in his early years appears from the fact that his beautiful song "Mary Morison" was composed to it.]

THE LAD THEY CA' JUMPIN JOHN.

HER daddie forbad, her minnie forbad,
Forbidden she wadna be :
She wadna trow't, the browst she brew'd,
Wad taste sae bitterlie.

Chorus.—The lang lad they ca' Jumpin John
Beguil'd the bonie lassie,
The lang lad they ca' Jumpin John
Beguil'd the bonie lassie.

* progressed.

A cow and a cauf, a yowe and a hauf,
 And thretty gude shillins and three ;
 A vera gude tocher, a cotter-man's dochter,
 The lass wi' the bonie black e'e.
 The lang lad, &c.

[The above lines belong to the class of which Burns thus observed
 "Here let me once for all apologize for many silly compositions of mine
 this work.* Many of the beautiful airs wanted words. In the hurry of
 other avocations, if I could string a parcel of rhymes together anything
 near tolerable, I was fain to let them pass. He must be an excellent poet
 whose every performance is excellent."]

TALK OF HIM THAT'S FAR AWAY.

MUSING on the roaring ocean,
 Which divides my love and me ;
 Wearying heav'n in warm devotion,
 For his weal where'er he be.

Hope and Fear's alternate billow
 Yielding late to Nature's law,
 Whispering spirits round my pillow,
 Talk of him that's far awa.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,
 Ye who never shed a tear,
 Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,
 Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me,
 Downy sleep, the curtain draw ;
 Spirits kind, again attend me,
 Talk of him that's far awa !

[These pathetic stanzas, the poet informs us, were composed "out of compliment to a Mrs M'Lauchlan, whose husband is an officer in the East Indies.

* Johnson's *Museum*, 1788.

TO DAUNTON ME.

The blude-red rose at Yule may blaw,
The simmer lilies bloom in snaw,
The frost may freeze the deepest sea ;
But an auld man shall never daunton me.

Refrain.—To daunton me, to daunton me,
An auld man shall never daunton me.

To daunton me, and me sae young,
Wi' his fause heart and flatt'ring tongue,
That is the thing you shall never see,
For an auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

For a' his meal and a' his maut,
For a' his fresh beef and his saut,
For a' his gold and white monie,
An auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

His gear may buy him kye and yowes,
His gear may buy him glens and knowes ;
But me he shall not buy nor fee,
For an auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

He hirples twa-fauld as he dow,
Wi' his toothless gab and his auld beld pow,
And the rain rains down frae his red blear'd e'e ;
That auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

he word "daunton" in this song signifies to make an impression on, or
[ue.]

THE WINTER IT IS PAST.

THE winter it is past, and the summer comes at last,
 And the small birds, they sing on ev'ry tree;
 Now ev'ry thing is glad, while I am very sad,
 Since my true love is parted from me.

The rose upon the breer, by the waters running clear
 May have charms for the linnet or the bee;
 Their little loves are blest, and their little hearts at ease
 But my true love is parted from me.

[The foregoing two verses were found in the poet's manuscript, but in truth, only the second stanza was composed by him. With a desire to preserve its beautiful air, our author had culled three verses from a ballad, known under the title of "The Currach of Kildare," and, by interpolating a stanza of his own, and smoothing the others a little, he produced the pretty song in four verses, given at the close of Johnson's second volume. The two concluding stanzas are these:—

My love, like yonder sun, in the firmament doth run,
 Ever bright, ever constant and true;
 But his is like the moon that wanders up and down,
 And every month it is new.

Ye maidens cross'd in love—and the cross will not remove—
 How I pity the pains you endure!
 For experience makes me know that your hearts are full of woe,
 A woe that no mortal can cure.]

THE BONIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA.

O HOW can I be blythe and glad,
 Or how can I gang brisk and braw,
 When the bonie lad that I lo'e best
 Is o'er the hills and far awa!

It's no the frosty winter wind,
 It's no the driving drift and snaw;

But ay the tear comes in my e'e,
To think on him that's far awa.¹

My father pat me frae his door,
My friends they hae disown'd me a';
But I hae ane will tak my part,
The bonie lad that's far awa.

A pair o' glooves he bought to me,
And silken snoods * he gae me twa ;
And I will wear them for his sake,
The bonie lad that's far awa.

O weary Winter soon will pass,
And Spring will cleed † the birken shaw ; ‡
And my young babie will be born,
And he'll be hame that's far awa.

he poet's Arcadian communications with Clarinda were disturbed, during the latter part of January, by certain unpleasant intelligence.

Chambers informs us that "when Jean was driven, in the middle of February, from her parents' dwelling, she was by Burns's request sheltered by his friend Mrs Muir, the wife of the honest miller of Tarbolton alluded to in Dr Hornbook. The poet now established her in a lodging in Edinburgh, and succeeded in obtaining the benefit of her mother's attendance in her present delicate situation."

On the 10th of March, Burns returned to Edinburgh to execute the lease of Collieston Island betwixt Mr Miller and him ; and while there, he accomplished several other important matters—the obtaining an order from the board of Exchequer for his formal instructions, and the adjustment of his accounts with the same. While thus absent in Edinburgh, intelligence must have reached him from home, first of Jean's delivery of twin-children, and secondly, of the death within a few days after birth. Chambers with great probability suggests that Jean Armour's condition above explained formed the pathetic subject of the ballad in the text.]

* bands for the hair.

† cleed.

‡ birch-trees seen from a height.

This verse is not in Johnson's copy. It first appeared in Cromek's *Reliques*, 1808.

VERSES TO CLARINDA,
SENT WITH A PAIR OF WINE-GLASSES.

FAIR Empress of the poet's soul,
And Queen of poetesses ;
Clarinda, take this little boon,
This humble pair of glasses :

And fill them up with generous juice,
As generous as your mind ;
And pledge them to the generous toast,
"The whole of human kind !"

"To those who love us !" second fill ;
But not to those whom *we* love ;
Lest we love those who love not us—
A third—"to thee and me, love !"

[Burns, having arranged the various matters which brought him to Ayrshire to Edinburgh for a fortnight in the month of March, took a farewell of Clarinda, and left for Glasgow, on Monday the 24th, *en route* for Dumfriesshire. He had some business to adjust there in relation to future farm ; but his journey was so speedily executed that he was back at Mossgiel on the last day of the same month. It was on leaving Edinburgh the period referred to, that he presented Clarinda with the parting which occasioned the above verses.

About a year after this period, the poet was again in Edinburgh for a brief period. He did not see Clarinda, and he stated his reason thus in a subsequent letter to her :—"I would have called on you when I was in town, indeed I could not have resisted it, but that Mr Ainslie told me we were determined to avoid your windows while I was in town, lest even a glance of me should occur in the street."]

THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT.

Air—"Captain O'Kean."

THE small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning,
The murmuring streamlet winds clear thro' the vale ;
The primroses blow in the dews of the morning,
And wild scatter'd cowslips bedeck the green dale :

What can give pleasure, or what can seem fair,
When the lingering moments are numbered wi' care?
No birds sweetly singing, nor flow'rs gaily springing,
Can soothe the sad bosom of joyless despair.

The deed that I dar'd, could it merit their malice?
King and a father to place on his throne!
His right are these hills, and his right are these valleys,
Where the wild beasts find shelter, tho' I can find none!
'Tis not my suff'rings thus wretched, forlorn;
My brave gallant friends, 'tis your ruin I mourn;
Your faith proved so loyal in hot-bloody trial—
How can I make it no better return!

It was during the rapid journey to and from Dumfries, referred to in our note, that the opening stanza of the above song was composed. The day after his return home, the poet addressed a letter to his musical friend, Robert Cleghorn, of Saughton Mills, Edinburgh, in these terms:—
"Yesterday, my dear sir, as I was riding through a track of melancholy
moorlands between Galloway and Ayrshire, it being Sunday, I turned my
thoughts to psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and your favourite air,
Stain O' Kean, coming at length into my head, I tried these words to it,"

By advice of his Edinburgh friends, he was eventually persuaded to connect his second stanza so as to give a Jacobite turn to that fine pastoral commencement, which he did by putting the language of the song into the mouth of Prince Charles Edward.]

EPISTLE TO HUGH PARKER.

IN this strange land, this uncouth clime,
A land unknown to prose or rhyme;
Where words ne'er cross't the Muse's heckles,*
Nor limpet in poetic shackles:

* Hackles—an instrument for dressing flax.

A land that Prose did never view it,
 Except when drunk he stacher't * thro' it ;
 Here, ambush'd by the chimla † cheek,
 Hid in an atmosphere of reek, ‡
 I hear a wheel thrum i' the neuk, §
 I hear it—for in vain I leuk.
 The red peat gleams, a fiery kernel,
 Enhuskèd by a fog infernal :
 Here, for my wonted rhyming raptures,
 I sit and count my sins by chapters ;
 For life and spunk like ither Christians.
 I'm dwindled down to mere existence,
 Wi' nae converse but Gallowa' bodies,¹
 Wi' nae kenn'd face but "Jenny Geddes,"²
 Jenny, my Pegasean pride !
 Dowie || she saunters down Nithside,
 And ay a westlin leuk she throws,
 While tears hap o'er her auld brown nose !
 Was it for this, wi' cannie care,
 Thou bure the Bard through many a shire ?
 At howes or hillocks never stumbled,
 And late or early never grumbled ?—
 O had I power like inclination,
 I'd heeze ¶ thee up a constellation,
 To canter with the Sagitarre,
 Or loup the ecliptic like a bar ;
 Or turn the pole like any arrow ;
 Or, when auld Phœbus bids good-morrow,
 Down the zodiac urge the race,
 And cast dirt on his godship's face ;

* staggered. † chimney. ‡ smoke. § birr in the corner. || sadly. ¶ he

¹ Ellisland is on the eastern border of Kirkcudbright, or Galloway.

² The poet's favourite mare : her "westlin leuk" was in the direction of Ayrshire. More strictly, it was *north-west*.

For I could lay my bread and kail
 He'd ne'er cast saut upo' thy tail.—
 Wi' a' this care and a' this grief,
 And sma', sma' prospect of relief,
 And nought but peat reek i' my head,
 How can I write what ye can read?—
 Tarbolton, twenty-fourth o' June,
 Ye'll find me in a better tune ;
 But till we meet and weet our whistle,
 Tak this excuse for nae epistle.

ROBERT BURNS.

The foregoing appears to be the earliest result of the bard's poetic
 efforts, after taking possession of his farm in Dumfriesshire. He arrived
 at Ellisland on 12th June, and until a new house could be built for him, he
 had to put up with the wretched accommodation so humorously described in
 the next.

At the same time during the preceding month of May, the poet was privately
 married to Jean Armour. Accordingly, to this month of June 1788, the
 poet afterwards referred as his "honeymoon" period, although some ten
 days thereof were spent in solitude by the banks of the Nith at Ellisland.
 The gentleman to whom the preceding Epistle was addressed is referred
 to in one of the poet's letters to Mr Robert Muir of Kilmarnock. On 26th
 August 1787, he sends his compliments to Messrs W. & H. Parker, and adds,
 "My hope Hughoc is going on and prospering with God and Miss M'Causlin."
 We have no means of ascertaining what degree of success attended his
 courtship of that lady.]

OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.

Tune—"Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey."

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw,
 I dearly like the west,
 For there the bonie lassie lives,
 The lassie I lo'e best :
 There's wild-woods grow, and rivers row,
 And mony a hill between :
 But day and night my fancy's flight
 Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
 I see her sweet and fair :
 I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
 I hear her charm the air :
 There's not a bonie flower that springs,
 By fountain, shaw, or green ;
 There's not a bonie bird that sings,
 But minds me o' my Jean.

[This is a universal favourite among the lyrics of the author. His opinion concerning it is simply this :—"The air is by Marshall, the song I composed out of compliment to Mrs Burns. *N. B.*—It was during the honeymoon."

We must now imagine the poet in his solitude at Ellisland, between the 12th and 22nd of June, while his Jean is at Mossiel—to quote his own words—"regularly, and constantly apprenticed to my mother and sister in their dairy and other rural business." In the immediately preceding poem, he represents even "Jenny Geddes" as being home-sick—

"And ay a westlin leuk she throws,
 While tears hap o'er her auld brown nose!"

and in this little song, Jenny's master follows her example.

"Of a' the airts the wind can blaw,
 I dearly like the west," &c.

The peculiar style of expression in line fifth has been often criticised ; people have pronounced it ungrammatical ; but it is Burns's own well-considered phraseology, and its simplicity is very musical to a Scotch ear.

The briefness of the song tempted Mr John Hamilton of Edinburgh to make a continuation, in two double stanzas.

"Oh blaw, ye westlin winds, blaw saft, among the leafy trees ;
 Wi' gentle gale, frae muir and dale, bring hame the laden bees ;
 And bring the lassie back to me, that's aye sae neat and clean :
 Ae blink o' her wad banish care, sae charming is my Jean.

"What sighs and vows, among the knowes, hae pass'd atween us twa
 How fain to meet, how wae to part, that day she gaed awa !
 The Powers aboon can only ken (to whom the heart is seen)
 That nane can be sae dear to me as my sweet, lovely Jean." *

* Burns's own parallel couplet, in this connection, runs thus :—

"That, dearer than my deathless soul, I still would love my Jean."

SONG.—I HAE A WIFE O' MY AIN.

I HAE a wife o' my ain,
I'll partake wi' naebody ;
I'll take Cuckold frae nane,
I'll gie Cuckold to naebody.

I hae a penny to spend,
There—thanks to naebody'

I hae naething to lend,
I'll borrow frae naebody.

I am naebody's lord,
I'll be slave to naebody ;
I hae a gude braid sword,
I'll tak dunts frae naebody

I'll be merry and free,
I'll be sad for naebody ;

Naebody cares for me,
I care for naebody.

This off-hand but characteristic effusion appears to have been produced at Ellisland, about the same time as the preceding song. Burns wrote to Blacklock, and others of his friends (according to his own phrase), "from the field of Matrimony in June," and these verses, in imitation of an old mad, were dashed off impromptu in one of those letters. Currie's observations in connection with this production are as follow:—"Pleased with seeing the grounds he was about to cultivate, and with rearing a building that should give shelter to his wife and children, and (as he fondly hoped) to his own grey hairs, sentiments of independence buoyed up his mind, pictures of domestic content and peace rose on his imagination: and a few days passed away, as he himself informs us, the most tranquil, if not the happiest, which he ever experienced."

VERSES IN FRIARS' CARSE HERMITAGE.

THOU whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these maxims on thy soul

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night in darkness lost ;
Hope not sunshine every hour,
Fear not clouds will always lour.

Happiness is but a name,
Make content and ease thy aim,
Ambition is a meteor-gleam ;
Fame a restless idle dream ;

Peace, th' tend'rest flow'r of spring ;
Pleasures, insects on the wing ;
Those that sip the dew alone—
Make the butterflies thy own ;
Those that would the bloom devour—
Crush the locusts, save the flower.

For the future be prepar'd,
Guard wherever thou can'st guard ;
But thy utmost duly done,
Welcome what thou can'st not shun.
Follies past, give thou to air,
Make their *consequence* thy care :
Keep the name of Man in mind,
And dishonour not thy kind.
Reverence with lowly heart
Him, whose wondrous work thou art ;
Keep His Goodness still in view,
Thy trust, and thy example, too.

Stranger, go ! Heaven be thy guide !
Quod the Beadsman of Nidside.

[In a letter to Mrs Dunlop of 10th August, the poet tells her that these lines are "almost the only favours the Muses have conferred" since he came to that neighbourhood. In the same letter he also transcribes four lines of one of his Epistles to Mr Graham of Fintry : it therefore seems probable that he was now trying to act on the advice which Dr Moore had given him.]

year before. A letter from that gentleman, dated 23rd May 1787, is passage :—" You ought to deal more sparingly for the future in the cial dialect : why should you, by using that, limit the number of your rs to those who understand the Scottish, when you can extend it to sons of taste who understand the English language?"

The visit which the poet paid to Ayrshire about 22nd June was a very ne, for he was back to Ellisland within a week. His next neighbour, t than a mile's distance up the Nith, was the proprietor of Friars —Mr Robert Riddell (styled, of Glenriddell)—a gentleman of anti- n and literary tastes. In a little hermitage erected there, the poet nd of spending an occasional musing hour, and the verses in the text re derstood to have been composed under its shelter.]

O ALEX. CUNNINGHAM, ESQ., WRITER,
EDINBURGH.

ELLISLAND, NITHSDALE, *July 27th, 1783.*

My godlike friend—nay, do not stare,
You think the phrase is odd-like ;
But 'God is Love,' the saints declare,
Then surely thou art god-like.

And is thy ardour still the same ?
And kindled still at ANNA ?
Others may boast a partial flame,
But thou art a volcano !

Ev'n Wedlock asks not love beyond
Death's tie-dissolving portal ;
But thou, omnipotently fond,
May'st promise love immortal !

Thy wounds such healing powers defy,
Such symptoms dire attend them,
That last great antihectic try—
MARRIAGE perhaps may mend them.

Sweet Anna has an air—a grace,
Divine, magnetic, touching ;

She talks, she charms—but who can trace
The process of bewitching?

*

*

*

*

My spurr-galled, spavined Pegasus makes so hobbling a progress on the course of *Extempore*, that I must here alight, and try the footpath of prose.

[The "Anna" referred to in the verses, of whom Cunningham was much enamoured, was a celebrated Edinburgh beauty, described by Burns as "an amiable and accomplished young lady with whom I fancy I have the honor of being a little acquainted." She was Miss Anne Stewart, daughter of John Stewart, Esq. of East Craigs. The "omnipotent" lover, however, soon learned that his affections had been misapplied for within six months after the date of Burns's letter recommending "marriage" to his friend, as the grand cure for the wounds from Cupid's shaft, she became the wife of his rival, Mr Forrest Dewar, Surgeon. We find the name of this gentleman on the list of Town Councillors of Edinburgh who were elected in October 1788, William Creech being then one of the Bailies. Mr Dewar had been in the Council during the two previous years.]

SONG.—ANNA, THY CHARMS.

ANNA, thy charms my bosom fire,
And waste my soul with care ;
But ah ! how bootless to admire,
When fated to despair !

Yet in thy presence, lovely Fair,
To hope may be forgiven ;
For sure 'twere impious to despair
So much in sight of Heaven.

[This little epigrammatic song has been a puzzle among the producers of Burns. It occupies a whole page in his editions of 1793 and 1794, and no annotator has ever ventured to throw any light upon it. In short, having the song not appeared under the author's own authority, its authenticity may well have been questioned ; for the language does not seem to flow naturally from his lips, and there is no known incident in his life to which it may be referred.]

The mystery is now cleared up, the song in the text being simply a vicarious effusion, intended to proceed from the lips of the author's friend Cunningham.]

THE FÊTE CHAMPETRE.

Tune—"Killicrankie."

O WHA will to Saint Stephen's House,
 To do our errands there, man?
 O wha will to Saint Stephen's House
 O' th' merry lads of Ayr, man?
 Or will we send a man o' law?
 Or will we send a sodger?
 Or him wha led o'er Scotland a'
 The meikle Ursa-Major?¹

Come, will ye court a noble lord,
 Or buy a score o' lairds, man?
 For worth and honour pawn their word,
 Their vote shall be Glencaird's,² man.
 Ane gies them coin, ane gies them wine,
 Anither gies them clatter;
 Annbank,³ wha guessed the ladies' taste,
 He gies a Fête Champetre.

When Love and Beauty heard the news,
 The gay green woods amang, man;
 Where, gathering flowers, and busking bowers,
 They heard the blackbird's sang, man:
 A vow, they seal'd it with a kiss,
 Sir Politics to fetter;
 As their's alone, the patent bliss,
 To hold a Fête Champetre.

Then mounted Mirth on gleesome wing,
 O'er hill and dale she flew, man;

James Boswell, who accompanied Dr Johnson on his Scottish tour.
 Sir John Whitefoord, then residing at Cloncaird or "Glencaird."
 William Cunninghame, Esq., of Annbank and Enterkin.

Ilk wimpling burn, ilk crystal spring,
Ilk glen and shaw she knew, man :
She summon'd every social sprite,
That sports by wood or water,
On th' bonie banks of Ayr to meet,
And keep this Fête Champetre.

Cauld Boreas, wi' his boisterous crew,
Were bound to stakes like kye, man ;
And Cynthia's car, o' silver fu',
Clamb up the starry sky, man :
Reflected beams dwell in the streamæ,
Or down the current shatter ;
The western breeze steals thro' the trees,
To view this Fête Champetre.

How many a robe sae gaily floats !
What sparkling jewels glance, man !
To Harmony's enchanting notes,
As moves the mazy dance, man.
The echoing wood, the winding flood,
Like Paradise did glitter,
When angels met, at Adam's yett,
To hold their Fête Champetre.

When Politics came there, to mix
And make his ether-stane,¹ man !
He circled round the magic ground,
But entrance found he nane, man :
He blush'd for shame, he quat his name,
Forswore it, every letter,
Wi' humble prayer to join and share
This festive Fête Champetre.

¹ Adder-stone,—alluding to a superstition, that those curious relics of antiquity (ignorantly supposed to be formed from the slime of adders) operated as charms.

Writing to an Edinburgh correspondent in September 1788, the poet says "I am generally about half my time in Ayrshire, with my 'darling Jean,' then, at lucid intervals, I throw my horny fist across my be-cobwebbed head, much in the same manner as an old wife throws her hands across the spokes of her spinning-wheel." It is pleasing to hear him admit that his "lucid intervals" of devotion to the Muse occurred while he was enjoying the society of his wife; and accordingly we may be certain that the above poem was the result of one of those visits. The incident thus celebrated occurred during the summer or autumn of 1788; but Gilbert Burns, in his account of the transaction, does not say how his brother was led to interest himself so much in this local affair. The "Fête Champetre" was an entertainment given by William Cunninghame, Esq. of Annbank and Enterkin, to the gentry of Ayrshire, on the occasion of his attaining his majority and coming on possession of his grandfather's estates. He wished to introduce himself with *éclat* to the county, and hit upon the novelty of an open air festival within his grounds on the banks of the Ayr. The peasantry believed that the real object of the gathering was a political one, with a view to arrange about the candidature at the next parliamentary election. The poet, however, explains that Love and Beauty conspired to exclude politics from the charmed circle.]

EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY,

REQUESTING A FAVOUR.¹

WHEN Nature her great master-piece design'd,
And fram'd her last, best work, the human mind,
Her eye intent on all the mazy plan,
She form'd of various parts the various Man.

Then first she calls the useful many forth;
Plain plodding Industry, and sober Worth:
Thence peasants, farmers, native sons of earth,
And merchandise' whole genus take their birth:

"This is our poet's first epistle to Graham of Fintry. It is not equal to the later one—'Late crippled of an arm,' &c., but it contains too much of the characteristic vigour of its author to be suppressed. A little more knowledge of natural history, or of chemistry was wanted to enable him to execute the original conception correctly."—*Currie*.

Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,
And all mechanics' many-apron'd kinds.
Some other rarer sorts are wanted yet,
The lead and buoy are needful to the net :
The *caput mortuum* of gross desires
Makes a material for mere knights and squires ;
The martial phosphorus is taught to flow,
She kneads the lumpish philosophic dough,
Then marks th' unyielding mass with grave designs,
Law, physic, politics, and deep divines ;
Last, she sublimes th' Aurora of the poles,
The flashing elements of female souls.

The order'd system fair before her stood,
Nature, well pleas'd, pronounc'd it very good ;
But ere she gave creating labour o'er,
Half-jest, she tried one curious labour more.
Some spumy, fiery, *ignis fatuus* matter,
Such as the slightest breath of air might scatter ;
With arch-alacrity and conscious glee,
(Nature may have her whim as well as we,
Her Hogarth-art perhaps she meant to show it),
She forms the thing and christens it—a Poet :
Creature, tho' oft the prey of care and sorrow,
When blest to-day, unmindful of to-morrow ;
A being form'd t' amuse his graver friends,
Admir'd and prais'd—and there the homage ends ;
A mortal quite unfit for Fortune's strife,
Yet oft the sport of all the ills of life ;
Prone to enjoy each pleasure riches give,
Yet haply wanting wherewithal to live ;
Longing to wipe each tear, to heal each groan,
Yet frequent all unheeded in his own.
But honest Nature is not quite a Turk,
She laugh'd at first, then felt for her poor work :
Pitying the propless climber of mankind,

She cast about a *standard tree* to find ;
And, to support his helpless woodbine state,
Attach'd him to the generous, truly great :
A title, and the only one I claim,
To lay strong hold for help on bounteous Graham.

Pity the tuneful Muses' hapless train,
Weak, timid landsmen on life's stormy main !
Their hearts no selfish stern absorbent stuff,
That never gives—tho' humbly takes enough ;
The little fate allows, they share as soon,
Unlike sage proverb'd Wisdom's hard-wrung boon :
The world were blest did bliss on them depend,
Ah, that " the friendly e'er should want a friend ! "
Let Prudence number o'er each sturdy son,
Who life and wisdom at one race begun,
Who feel by reason and who give by rule,
(Instinct's a brute, and sentiment a fool !)
Who make poor " will do " wait upon " I should "—
We own they're prudent, but who feels they're good ?
Ye wise ones, hence ! ye hurt the social eye !
God's image rudely etch'd on base alloy !
But come ye who the godlike pleasure know,
Heaven's attribute distinguish'd—to bestow !
Whose arms of love would grasp the human race :
Come *thou* who giv'st with all a courtier's grace ;
FRIEND OF MY LIFE, true patron of my rhymes !
Prop of my dearest hopes for future times.
Why shrinks my soul half blushing, half afraid,
Backward, abash'd to ask thy friendly aid ?
I know my need, I know thy giving hand,
I crave thy friendship at thy kind command ;
But there are such who court the tuneful Nine—
Heavens ! should the branded character be mine !
Whose *verse* in manhood's pride sublimely flows,
Yet vilest reptiles in their begging *prose*.

Mark, how their lofty independent spirit
Soars on the spurning wing of injur'd merit !
Seek you the proofs in private life to find ?
Pity the best of words should be but wind !
So, to heaven's gates the lark's shrill song ascends,
But grovelling on the earth the carol ends.
In all the clam'rous cry of starving want,
They dun Benevolence with shameless front ;
Oblige them, patronise their tinsel lays—
They persecute you all your future days !
Ere my poor soul such deep damnation stain,
My horny fist assume the plough again,
The pie-bald jacket let me patch once more,
On eighteenpence a week I've liv'd before.
Tho', thanks to Heaven, I dare even that last shift,
I trust, meantime, my boon is in thy gift :
That, plac'd by thee upon the wish'd-for height,
Where, man and nature fairer in her sight,
My Muse may imp her wing for some sublimer flight.

[In a letter from the poet to Miss Chalmers, written from Ellisland, 16th September 1788, he says—"I very lately—namely, since harvest began—wrote a poem, not in imitation, but in the manner, of Pope's *Moral Epistles*. It is only a short essay, just to try the strength of my Muse's pinion in that way." In the same letter he says, "You will be pleased to hear that I have laid aside idle *éclat*, and bind every day after my reapers. To save me from that horrid situation of at any time going down, in a losing bargain of a farm, to misery, I have taken my excise instructions, and have my commission in my pocket for any emergency of fortune. If I could set all before your view, whatever disrespect you, in common with the world, have for this business, I know you would approve of my idea."

The favour, therefore, that our poet requested from Mr Graham in a prose letter which accompanied his poetic epistle, was to use his influence to have him appointed Excise officer of the district in proximity to Ellisland. That desire of his was gratified about one year after the date of the above Epistle.]

SONG.—THE DAY RETURNS.

Tune.—"Seventh of November."

I composed this song out of compliment to one of the happiest and worthiest married couples in the world, Robert Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell and his lady. At their fireside I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings than at all the houses of fashionable people in this country put together; and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours of my life.—*R. B.*, 1791.

THE day returns, my bosom burns,
 The blissful day we twa did meet :
 Tho' winter wild in tempest toil'd,
 Ne'er summer-sun was half sae sweet.
 Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
 And crosses o'er the sultry line ;
 Than kingly robes, than crowns and globes,
 Heav'n gave me more—it made thee mine !

While day and night can bring delight,
 Or Nature aught of pleasure give ;
 While joys above my mind can move,
 For thee, and thee alone I live.
 When that grim foe of life below
 Comes in between to make us part,
 The iron hand that breaks our band,
 It breaks my bliss—it breaks my heart !

[The date of this song is proved to be prior to 16th September 1788, by the poet's letter of that date to Miss Chalmers, in which the song is transcribed. He remarks thus :—"Johnson's Collection of Scots songs is going on in the third volume ; and of consequence finds me a consumpt for a great deal of idle metre. One of the most tolerable things I have done in that way is two stanzas I made to an air a musical gentleman of my acquaintance composed for the anniversary of his wedding-day, which happens on the 7th of November."]

A MOTHER'S LAMENT

FOR THE DEATH OF HER SON.

FATE gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierc'd my darling's heart ;
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart.

By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonor'd laid ;
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravish'd young ;
So I, for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live-day long.

Death, oft I've fear'd thy fatal blow.
Now, fond, I bare my breast ;
O, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest !

[The date of this pathetic lyric is proved by the poet's letter to M Dunlop of 27th September 1788, in which he says, "I am just arrived Mauchline from Nithsdale, and will be here a fortnight. I was on horse back this morning by three o'clock ; for between my wife and my farm just forty-six miles. As I jogged on in the dark I was taken with a poet's fit as follows :"—The above is then transcribed with the explanation that represents "Mrs Fergusson of Craigdarroch's lamentation for the death of her son, an uncommonly promising youth of eighteen or nineteen years of age." A newspaper obituary gives the date of the youth's death—November 19, 1787. It seems that Mrs Stewart of Stair, an early patron of the poet, lost her only son by death about the same time (5th December 1787). Accordingly, it was but natural that Burns should enclose her a copy of the Lament, which applied as closely to her bereavement as to that suffered by Mrs Fergusson.]

SONG.—O WERE I ON PARNASSUS HILL.

O WERE I on Parnassus hill,
Or had o' Helicon my fill,
That I might catch poetic skill,
 To sing how dear I love thee !
But Nith maun be my Muse's well,
My Muse maun be thy bonie sel',
On Corsincon I'll glowr and spell,
 And write how dear I love thee.

Then come, sweet Muse, inspire my lay !
For a' the lee-lang simmer's day
I couldna sing, I couldna say,
 How much, how dear, I love thee,
I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sae jimp, thy limbs sae clean,
Thy tempting lips, thy roguish een—
 By Heaven and Earth I love thee '

By night, by day, a-field, at hame,
The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame ;
And ay I muse and sing thy name—
 I only live to love thee.
Tho' I were doom'd to wander on,
Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
Till my last weary sand was run ;
 Till then—and then I love thee !

[This is another poetic compliment to Mrs Burns, composed at Nithside during the summer or autumn of 1788, while she still remained in Ayrshire. The "Corsincon" on which the eye of the bard was fixed during his ramblings, is a high conical hill at the base of which the infant Nith enters Dumfriesshire from New Cumnock in Ayrshire. The latter half of the second stanza of this lyric has been often instanced as the very perfection of personal description in a love-song. Writing to Miss Chalmers regarding Jean about the date of this composition, he says :—"I have got the handsomest figure, the sweetest temper, the soundest constitution, and the kindest heart in the country . . . And she has (O the partial lover ! you will cry) the finest ' wood-note wild ' I ever heard."]]

THE FALL OF THE LEAF.

THE lazy mist hangs from the brow of the hill,
 Concealing the course of the dark winding rill ;
 How languid the scenes, late so sprightly, appear !
 As Autumn to Winter resigns the pale year.

The forests are leafless, the meadows are brown,
 And all the gay foppery of summer is flown :
 Apart let me wander, apart let me muse,
 How quick Time is flying, how keen Fate pursues !

How long I have liv'd—but how much liv'd in vain,
 How little of life's scanty span may remain,
 What aspects old Time in his progress has worn,
 What ties cruel Fate, in my bosom has torn.

How foolish, or worse, till our summit is gain'd !
 And downward, how weaken'd, how darken'd, h
 pain'd !

Life is not worth having with all it can give—
 For something beyond it poor man sure must live.

[This grave production was sent along with "The Mother's Lament" to Dr Blacklock, in the poet's letter to him, dated from Mauchline, 1 November 1788. He there says—"I have sent you two melancholy things and I tremble lest they should too well suit the tone of your present feelings." He adds that he is "to move bag and baggage to Nithsdale a fortnight," and that he is "more and more pleased with the step he takes regarding Jean."]

I REIGN IN JEANIE'S BOSOM.

LOUIS, what reck I by thee,
 Or Geordie on his ocean ?
 Dyvor, * beggar louns † to me,
 I reign in Jeanie's bosom !

* bankrupt.

† low fellows.

Let her crown my love her law,
 And in her breast enthrone me,
 Kings and nations—swith awa !
 Reif* randies,† I disown ye !

such were the poet's sentiments, and such his expressions when he welcomed his wife to Nithsdale in the first week of December 1788. His house at Nithsdale was not yet in a seasoned condition for being used with comfort as a dwelling, and he had obtained the temporary use of a picturesque building about a mile farther down the Nith, at a place called "The Isle," in which locality his letters were occasionally dated during that winter. Cunningham has observed regarding the style of this little song:—"It is one of Burns's happy efforts, although the language is perhaps too peculiar to be fully felt by any, save Scotchmen ; but to them it comes with a comparative vigour of expression not usual in words fitted to music."]

IT IS NA, JEAN, THY BONIE FACE.

It is na, Jean, thy bonie face,
 Nor shape that I admire ;
 Altho' thy beauty and thy grace
 Might weel awauk desire.

Something, in ilka part o' thee,
 To praise, to love, I find,
 But dear as is thy form to me.
 Still dearer is thy mind.

Nae mair ungenerous wish I hae,
 Nor stronger in my breast,
 Than, if I canna mak thee sae,
 At least to see thee blest.

Content am I, if heaven shall give
 But happiness to thee ;
 And as wi' thee I'd wish to live,
 For thee I'd bear to die.

[These verses, which read like a calmly affectionate address by Burns to his wife, he informs us himself "were originally English, and that he gave them a Scotch dress."]

* plundering.

† bullies.

AULD LANG SYNE.

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind ?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld ¹ lang syne !

Chorus.—For auld lang syne, my dear,²
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint stowp !
And surely I'll be mine !
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine ;
But we've wander'd mony a weary fitt,⁴
Sin' auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine ;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And there's a hand, my trusty fere !^{*}
And gie's a hand o' thine !

* companion.



Marshall - Boston
1896



And we'll tak a right gude-willie * waught,†⁵
 For auld lang syne.
 For auld, &c.

Of the two versions of this song, we adopt for our text that supplied to Thomson in preference to the copy made for George Thomson. The arrangement of the verses is more natural: it wants the redundant syllable in the fourth line of stanza first; and the spelling of the Scotch words is more correct. The poet transcribed the song for Mrs Dunlop in his letter to her, dated 17th December 1788, and it is unfortunate that Dr Currie did not send a verbatim copy of it, along with that letter, instead of simply referring the reader to the Thomson correspondence for it. Thomson's closing verse stands *second* in Johnson, where it seems in its proper place, as having the plainest reference to the earlier stages of the interview between the long-separated friends. Many of our readers must have observed, that when a social company unites in singing the song before dispersing, it is the custom of the singers to join hands in a circle at the words, "And there's a hand," &c. This ought to conclude the song, with the chorus sung rapidly and emphatically thereafter. But how awkwardly, and out-of-place, does the slow singing of Thomson's closing verse come in after that excitement! And surely ye'll be your pint stowp," &c.—No, no! The play is over: no more pint stowps!

A silly controversy occasionally arises, is lulled, and rises again, regarding the expression "gude-willie waught." One class—a very thoughtless one, I rely—contends that the hyphen should be removed from the familiar expression "gude-willie," and used for connecting the latter half of that phrase with "waught"—a substantive that can stand its own ground. In short, "willie-waught" is nonsense; but "gude-willie" or "ill-willie" is a compound adjective in every-day use.

The poet pretended, both to Mrs Dunlop and George Thomson, that this song is the work of some heaven-inspired minstrel of the olden time, and to Thomson he went the length of saying, "it was never in print, nor even in manuscript (how did he know that?) till I took it down from an old man's singing."

The variations are:—¹ days o'. ² jo. ³ This stanza is shifted to the end, in the Thomson copy. ⁴ foot. ⁵ Chambers has "gude willie-waught" at p. 304, vol. ii., and "gude-willie waught," at p. 28, vol. iv., of his last edition. It must also be mentioned that there exists a MS. of the song in the poet's logograph—a kind of parody, intended apparently for "mighty Squireships the quorum," in which the first verse runs thus!—

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
 And never thought upon!
 Let's hae a waught o' Malaga,
 For auld lang syne.]

* hearty, with good will.

† copious drink.

THE SILVER TASSIE.

Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,
 And fill it in a silver tassie ;
 That I may drink before I go,
 A service to my bonie lassie.
 The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith ;
 Fu' loud the wind blows frae the Ferry ;
 The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
 And I maun leave my bonie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
 The glittering spears are rankèd ready ;
 The shouts o' war are heard afar,
 The battle closes deep and bloody ;
 It's not the roar o' sea or shore,
 Wad mak me langer wish to tarry ;
 Nor shouts o' war that's heard afar—
 It's leaving thee, my bonie Mary !

[There are few of Burns's lyrics that are more admired than this, which was first communicated in December 1788, (to Mrs Dunlop) along with immortal "Auld Lang Syne." These "two old stanzas" as he termed them, he afterwards admitted were his own, with exception of the four opening lines.

It is said that this song was suggested to Burns on witnessing a lady parting at the pier of Leith, between a young lady and her lover, a military officer who was about to step into the boat which was to convey him to a ship, ready to sail abroad with his Regiment.]

THE PARTING KISS.

HUMID seal of soft affections,
 Tenderest pledge of future bliss,
 Dearest tie of young connections,
 Love's first snowdrop, virgin kiss !

Speaking silence, dumb confession,
 Passion's birth, and infant's play,
 Dove-like fondness, chaste concession,
 Glowing dawn of future day !

Sorrowing joy, Adieu's last action,
 (Lingering lips must now disjoin),
 What words can ever speak affection
 So thrilling and sincere as thine !

[No place appears better fitted to introduce this piece, than in connection with the immediately preceding song. All that is known regarding the production is that it appeared upwards of fifty years ago as a poem by Burns, in a periodical paper published at Liverpool, under the title of "The Kaleidoscope." Chambers remarks that "Burns's authorship of it cannot well be doubted;" but we should like to be told something regarding the manuscript of a piece so different from the author's usual style of composition.]

WRITTEN IN FRIARS CARSE HERMITAGE, ON NITHSIDE.

LATER VERSION.

THOU whom chance may hither lead,
 Be thou clad in russet weed,
 Be thou deckt in silken stole,
 Grave these counsels on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
 Sprung from night,—in darkness lost ;
 Hope not sunshine ev'ry hour,
 Fear not clouds will always lour.

As Youth and Love with sprightly dance,
 Beneath thy morning star advance,
 Pleasure with her siren air
 May delude the thoughtless pair ;
 Let Prudence bless Enjoyment's cup,
 Then raptur'd sip, and sip it up.

As thy day grows warm and high,
Life's meridian flaming nigh,
Dost thou spurn the humble vale?
Life's proud summits would'st thou scale?
Check thy climbing step, elate,
Evils lurk in felon wait :
Dangers, eagle-pinioned, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold !
While cheerful Peace, with linnet song,
Chants the lowly dells among.

As the shades of ev'ning close,
Beck'ning thee to long repose ;
As life itself becomes disease,
Seek the chimney-nook of ease :
There ruminate with sober thought,
On all thou'st seen, and heard, and wrought,
And teach the sportive youngers round,
Saws of experience, sage and sound :
Say, man's true, genuine estimate,
The grand criterion of his fate,
Is not, art thou high or low ?
Did thy fortune ebb or flow ?
Did many talents gild thy span ?
Or frugal Nature grudge thee one ?
Tell them, and press it on their mind,
As thou thyself must shortly find,
The smile or frown of awful Heav'n,
To Virtue or to Vice is giv'n,
Say, to be just, and kind, and wise—
There solid self-enjoyment lies ;
That foolish, selfish, faithless ways
Lead to be wretched, vile, and base

Thus resign'd and quiet, creep
To the bed of lasting sleep,—

Sleep, whence thou shalt ne'er awake,
 Night, where dawn shall never break,
 Till future life, future no more,
 To light and joy the good restore,
 To light and joy unknown before.
 Stranger, go ! Heav'n be thy guide !
 Quod the Beadsman of Nithside.

This altered version of the poem was written in December 1788. He inscribed with his diamond pen, on one of the panes of glass in the grotto, the opening eight and the closing two lines of the poem, and when the hermitage was removed by the proprietor in 1835, an old lady bought it.]

THE POET'S PROGRESS.

A POEM IN EMBRYO.

THOU, Nature, partial Nature, I arraign ;
 Of thy caprice maternal I complain.
 The peopled fold thy kindly care have found,
 The horned bull, tremendous, spurns the ground ;
 The lordly lion has enough and more,
 The forest trembles at his very roar ;
 Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell,
 The puny wasp, victorious, guards his cell.
 Thy minions, kings defend, controul, devour,
 All th' omnipotence of rule and power :
 Ropes and statesmen subtle wiles ensure ;
 The cit and polecat stink, and are secure :
 Roads with their poison, doctors with their drug,
 The priest and hedgehog, in their robes, are snug :
 When silly women have defensive arts,
 Their eyes, their tongues—and nameless other parts.
 But O thou cruel stepmother and hard,
 O thy poor fenceless, naked child, the Bard !
 A thing unteachable in worldly skill,
 And half an idiot too, more helpless still :

No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun,
No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun :
No horns, but those by luckless Hymen worn,
And those, alas ! not Amalthea's horn :
No nerves olfact'ry, true to Mammon's foot,
Or grunting, grub sagacious, evil's root :
The silly sheep that wanders wild astray,
Is not more friendless, is not more a prey ;
Vampyre-booksellers drain him to the heart,
And viper-critics cureless venom dart.

Critics ! appall'd I venture on the name,
Those cut-throat bandits in the paths of fame,
Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Monroes,
He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose :
By blockhead's daring into madness stung,
His heart by wanton, causeless malice wrung,
His well-won bays—than life itself more dear—
By miscreants torn who ne'er one sprig must wear ;
Foil'd, bleeding, tortur'd in th' unequal strife,
The hapless Poet flounces on thro' life,
Till, fled each hope that once his bosom fired,
And fled each Muse that glorious once inspir'd,
Low-sunk in squalid, unprotected age,
Dead even resentment for his injur'd page,
He heeds no more the ruthless critics' rage

So by some hedge the generous steed deceas'd,
For half-starv'd, snarling curs a dainty feast ;
By toil and famine worn to skin and bone,
Lies, senseless of each tugging bitch's son.

A little upright, pert, tart, tripping wight,
And still his precious self his dear delight ;
Who loves his own smart shadow in the streets,
Better than e'er the fairest she he meets ;
Much specious lore, but little understood,
(Veneering oft outshines the solid wood),

s solid sense, by inches you must tell,
 t mete his cunning by the Scottish ell !
 man of fashion too, he made his tour,
 arn'd "vive la bagatelle et vive l'amour ;"
 travell'd monkies their grimace improve,
 lish their grin—nay, sigh for ladies' love !
 s meddling vanity, a busy fiend,
 ll making work his selfish craft must mend.

.

. Crochallan came,
 e old cock'd hat, the brown surtout—the same ;
 s grisly beard just bristling in its might—
 was four long nights and days from shaving-night ;
 s uncomb'd, hoary locks, wild-staring, thatch'd
 ead, for thought profound and clear, unmatch'd ;
 t, tho' his caustic wit was biting-rude,
 s heart was warm, benevolent and good.

.

O Dulness, portion of the truly blest !
 lm, shelter'd haven of eternal rest !
 y sons ne'er madden in the fierce extremes
 Fortune's polar frost, or torrid beams ;
 mantling high she fills the golden cup,
 th sober, selfish ease they sip it up ;
 nscious the bounteous meed they well deserve,
 ey only wonder "some folks" do not starve !
 e grave, sage hern thus easy picks his frog,
 d thinks the mallard a sad worthless dog.
 hen disappointment snaps the thread of Hope,
 en, thro' disastrous night, they darkling grope,
 th deaf endurance sluggishly they bear,
 d just conclude that "fools are Fortune's care ;"

This couplet is supplied from another MS. : it may have been inadvertently omitted by the poet in making the copy from which the text is taken. It seems indispensable to the completeness of the passage.

So, heavy, passive to the tempest's shocks,
Strong on the sign-post stands the stupid ox.

Not so the idle Muses' mad-cap train,
Not such the workings of their moon-struck brain ;
In equanimity they never dwell,
By turns in soaring heaven, or vaulted hell !

[The concluding twenty lines of the preceding poem are inscribed in the poet's admired letter to Mrs Dunlop of 1st January 1789. The passage thus introduced:—"I am a very sincere believer in the Bible; but drawn by the conviction of a man, not by the halter of an ass.—Apropos of an ass; how do you like the following apostrophe to Dulness, which I intend to interweave in the *Poet's Progress*?—"O Dulness," &c. He certainly had been engaged in the composition of this piece when he penned the following sentence to the same lady about a fortnight before:—"My small acquaintance with farming is exceedingly more simple than what you have lately seen at Moreham Mains. But, be that as it may, the heart of *the man*, and the *aracy of the poet*, are the two grand considerations for which I live. If I were to be a *ridge* and dirty dunghills, are to engross the best part of the function of my soul immortal, I had better been a rook or a magpie at once, and then I should not have been plagued with any ideas superior to the breaking of clods and picking up grubs; not to mention barn-door cocks and mallards—creatures with which I could almost exchange lives at any time."

In a letter to Professor Dugald Stewart, from Ellisland on 20th January 1789, the poet thus refers to the poem:—"These fragments, if my designs succeed, are but a small part of the intended whole. I propose it shall be the work of my utmost exertions, ripened by years: of course I do not wish it much known. The fragment beginning 'A little, upright, pert, &c., I have not shown to man living till I now send it to you. It forms a postulate, the axioms, the definition of a character which, if it appears, shall be placed in a variety of lights. This particular part I send you merely as a sample of my hand at portrait-sketching; but lest idle conjecture should pretend to point out the original, please to let it be for your single inspection." The portrait-sketch referred to was intended to depict Creech.]

ELEGY ON THE YEAR 1788.

FOR lords or kings I dinna mourn,
E'en let them die—for that they're born :
But oh ! prodigious to reflect !
A *Townmont*,* sirs, is gane to wreck !

* twelvemonth.

O *Eighty-eight*, in thy sma' space,
 What dire events hae taken place !
 Of what enjoyments thou hast reft us !
 In what a pickle though hast left us !

The Spanish empire's tint * a head,¹
 And my auld toothless Bawtie's † dead :
 The tulyie's ‡ tough 'tween Pitt and Fox,
 And 'tween our Maggie's twa wee cocks ;
 The tane is game, a bluidy devil,
 But to the hen-birds unco civil ;
 The tither's something dour o' treadin,
 But better stuff ne'er claw'd a midden.

Ye ministers, come mount the poupit,
 An' cry till ye be hoarse an' roupet,§
 For *Eighty-eight*, he wished you weel,
 An' gaed ye a' baith gear|| an meal ;
 E'en mony a plack,¶ and mony a peck,
 Ye ken yoursels, for little feck ! **

Ye bonie lasses, dight †† your e'en,
 For some o' you hae tint ‡‡ a frien' ;
 In *Eighty-eight*, ye ken, was taen,
 What ye'll ne'er hae to gie again.

Observe the very nowt §§ an' sheep,
 How dowff||| an' daviely ¶¶ they creep ;
 Nay, even the yirth itsel does cry,
 For E'nburgh wells are grutten *** dry.²

lost.	† dog.	‡ contentions.	§ voice nearly lost.
wealth.	¶ coin.	** exertion.	†† wipe.
lost.	§§ nolt.	dull.	¶¶ listlessly. *** wept.

Charles III. of Spain, died 13th December 1788.

The Edinburgh newspapers in December 1788 refer to the hard frost
 h ing frozen up the wells.

O *Eighty-nine*, thou'st but a bairn,
 An' no owre auld, I hope, to learn !
 Thou beardless boy, I pray tak care,
 Thou now has got thy Daddy's chair ;
 Nae handcuff'd, mizl'd, hap-shackl'd *Regent*,¹
 But, like himsel, a full free agent,
 Be sure ye follow out the plan
 Nae waur than he did, honest man !
 As muckle better as you can.

January 1, 1789.

[This off-hand sketch found its way into the newspapers, not long after it was composed.]

THE HENPECKED HUSBAND.

CURS'D be the man, the poorest wretch in life,
 The crouching vassal to a tyrant wife !
 Who has no will but by her high permission,
 Who has not sixpence but in her possession ;
 Who must to her his dear friend's secrets tell,
 Who dreads a curtain lecture worse than hell.
 Were such the wife had fallen to my part,
 I'd break her spirit or I'd break her heart ;
 I'd charm her with the magic of a switch,
 I'd kiss her maids, and kick the perverse b——h.

[We are inclined to consider these lines as intended to be interwoven with some part of "The Poet's Progress"; but we do not hazard any conjecture concerning the individuals who suggested this picture of domestic discord. The following scraps seem to be of the same character.]

¹ In November 1788, the king shewed symptoms of mental disease; and proposals for a Regent were discussed.

VERSICLES ON SIGN-POSTS.

The everlasting surliness of a lion, Saracen's head, &c., or the unchangeableness of the landlord welcoming a traveller, on some sign-posts, would be no bad similes of the constant affected fierceness of a Bully, or the eternal simper of a Frenchman or a Fiddler."—*R. B.*

His face with smile eternal drest,
Just like the landlord to his guest,
High as they hang with creaking din,
To index out the Country Inn.

He looked just as your sign-post Lions do,
With aspect fierce, and quite as harmless too.

A head, pure, sinless quite of brain and soul,
The very image of a barber's Poll ;
It shews a human face, and wears a wig,
And looks, when well preserv'd, amazing big.

[These scraps are found in the MS. Book presented by Burns to Mrs. Dalrymple, about the year 1788. One of the entries under this heading is the couplet made use of in "The Poet's Progress," lines fifth and sixth from the close.]

ROBIN SHURE IN HAIRST.

Chorus.—Robin shure in hairst,

I shure wi' him ;
Fient a heuk had I,
Yet I stack by him.

I gaed up to Dunse,
To warp a wab o' plaiden,
At his daddie's yett,
Wha met me but Robin ;
Robin shure, &c.

Was na Robin bauld,
 Tho' I was a cottar,
 Play'd me sic a trick,
 An' me the Eller's dochter !
 Robin shure, &c.

Robin promis'd me
 A' my winter vittle ;
 Fient haet he had but three
 Guse-feathers and a whittle !
 Robin shure, &c.

[The identity of "Robin," a part of whose history is sketched in this rattling song, has not heretofore been fixed by any of the poet's annotations. It refers to an incident in the early life of Robert Ainslie, the friend of Burns, and the original sketch of the song was appended to a letter where the poet remarks, "I have brushed up the following old favourite song a little, with a view to your worship."

In a hitherto suppressed postscript to the poet's letter to Ainslie of August 1787, he thus specially refers to a child which Ainslie wished to name after Burns:—"Call your boy what you think proper, only interpose 'Burns.' What do you say to a Scripture name? for instance Zimri B. Ainslie, or Ahitophel? &c. Look your Bible for these two heroes," He was married, 22nd December 1798, and died 11th April 1838.

Lockhart, in 1828, remarked thus of Ainslie:—"Among other characters 'which fleeting Time procureth,' this amiable gentleman, whose youthful gaiety made him a chosen associate of Burns, is now chiefly known as author of some Manuals of Devotion."]

ODE, SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF MRS OSWALD OF AUCHENCROVE.

DWELLER in yon dungeon dark,
 Hangman of creation ! mark,
 Who in widow-weeds appears,
 Laden with unhonour'd years,
 Noosing with care a bursting purse,
 Baited with many a deadly curse?

STROPHE.

View the wither'd Beldam's face ;
 Can thy keen inspection trace
 Aught of Humanity's sweet, melting grace ?
 Note that eye, 'tis rheum o'erflows ;
 Pity's flood *there* never rose,
 See these hands, ne'er stretch'd to save,
 Hands that took, but never gave :
 Keeper of Mammon's iron chest,
 Lo, there she goes, unpitied and unblest,
 She goes, but not to realms of everlasting rest !

ANTISTROPHE.

Plunderer of Armies ! lift thine eyes,
 (A while forbear, ye torturing fiends ;)
 Seest thou whose step, unwilling, hither bends ?
 No fallen angel, hurl'd from upper skies ;
 'Tis thy trusty quondam Mate,
 Doom'd to share thy fiery fate ;
 She, tardy, hell-ward plies.

EPODE.

And are they of no more avail,
 Ten thousand glittering pounds a-year ?
 In other worlds can Mammon fail,
 Omnipotent as he is here !
 O, bitter mockery of the pompous bier,
 While down the wretched Vital Part is driven !
 The cave-lodg'd Beggar, with a conscience clear,
 Expires in rags, unknown, and goes to Heaven.

urns enclosed the above Ode to Dr Moore, in a letter where he thus
 ates the occasion which caused him to write it,—“ You probably knew the
 personally, an honour which I cannot boast ; but I spent my early years
 her neighbourhood, and among her servants and tenants. I know that
 was detested with the most heartfelt cordiality. However, in the par-
 ticular part of her conduct which roused my poetic wrath, she was much less
 bleable In January last, in my road to Ayrshire, I had put up at Bailie

Whigham's, in Sanquhar, the only tolerable inn in the place. The frost was keen, and the grim evening and howling wind, were ushering in a night of snow and drift. My horse and I were both much fatigued with the labour of the day, and just as my friend the Bailie and I were bidding defiance to the storm over a smoking bowl, in wheels the funeral pageantry of the great Mrs Oswald, and poor I am forced to brave all the horrors of the pestuous night, and jade my horse—my young favourite horse, whom I have just christened 'Pegasus'—twelve miles farther on, through the wide moors and hills of Ayrshire, to New Cumnock, the next inn. The power of poesy and prose sunk under me when I would describe what I felt. So I leave it to say, that when a good fire at New Cumnock had so far recovered my frozen sinews, I sat down and wrote the enclosed Ode."

The dowager widow, who died "unpitied and unblest" on 6th December 1788, was no blood-relation to the grand-nephew who married the beautiful *Lucy Johnston*, celebrated by Burns in 1795, and whose good-will she afterwards cultivated in Dumfries.]

PEGASUS AT WANLOCKHEAD.

WITH Pegasus upon a day,
Apollo weary flying,
Through frosty hills the journey lay,
On foot the way was plying.

Poor slipshod giddy Pegasus
Was but a sorry walker ;
To Vulcan then Apollo goes,
To get a frosty caulker.

Obliging Vulcan fell to work,
Threw by his coat and bonnet,
And did Sol's business in a crack ;
Sol paid him with a sonnet.

Ye Vulcan's sons of Wanlockhead,
Pity my sad disaster ;
My Pegasus is poorly shod,
I'll pay you like my master.

To John Taylor, Ramage's, 3 o'clock.

[Burns arrived one day at Wanlockhead when the roads were slippery with ice, and felt the necessity of having his horse's shoes sharpened.]

a of the village, having a monopoly of trade, vowed he could not then
time to attend to the poet's wants; and from the inn Burns indited
verses to John Taylor, a person who had influence with the smith, and
led on him at once to frost the shoes of Pegasus. The poet was
y enabled to resume his journey with some safety, after having paid
a with the Muse's coin and a dram at the inn.]

SAPPHO REDIVIVA—A FRAGMENT.

ISLAND, 24th January 1789—My dear Cunningham. . . . I shall
k ur opinion of some verses I have lately begun, on a theme of which
: the best judge I ever saw. It is Love, too, though not just warranted
law of nations. A married lady of my acquaintance, whose *crim.*
s our with a certain Captain has made some noise in the world, is
ped to write to him, now in the West Indies, as follows:—

I all I lov'd, neglected and forgot,
I friendly face e'er lights my squalid cot;
Sunn'd, hated, wrong'd, unpitied, unredrest,
The mock'd quotation of the scorner's jest!¹

I vain would Prudence, with decorous sneer,
Ent out a censuring world, and bid me fear;
Above the world, on wings of Love, I rise—
I now its worst, and can that worst despise:
I Prudence' direst bodements on me fall,
N. y, rich reward, o'er pays them all!²

And zephyrs waft thee to life's farthest shore,
Ne think of me and my distresses more,—

These four lines and introduction are quoted verbatim from the poet's
letter addressed to his friend Alexander Cunningham, writer, Edin-
burgh, now in possession of that gentleman's son, James Cunningham, Esq.,
S. Unfortunately the latter two pages, containing the remainder of the
transcribed, and the conclusion of the letter, have disappeared.

These six lines, together with the two closing lines of the preceding
fragment, are found quoted by the poet in his letter to Mrs M'Lehose
(Mrs La) dated 1794, apparently the last communication which passed
between them.

Falsehood accurst ! No ! still I beg a place,
 Still near thy heart some little, little trace ;
 For that dear trace the world I would resign :
 O let me live, and die, and think it mine !

"I burn, I burn, as when thro' ripen'd corn
 By driving winds the crackling flames are borne ;"¹
 Now raving-wild, I curse that fatal night,
 Then bless the hour that charm'd my guilty sight :
 In vain the laws their feeble force oppose,
 Chain'd at Love's feet, they groan, his vanquish'd fo
 In vain Religion meets my shrinking eye,
 I dare not combat, but I turn and fly :
 Conscience in vain upbraids th' unhallow'd fire,
 Love grasps her scorpions—stifled they expire !
 Reason drops headlong from his sacred throne,
 Your dear idea reigns, and reigns alone ;
 Each thought intoxicated homage yields,
 And riots wanton in forbidden fields.
 By all on high adoring mortals know !
 By all the conscious villain fears below !
 By your dear self !—the last great oath I swear,
 Not life, nor soul, were ever half so dear !

[These verses were written in reference to a celebrated Court of Sessions case, which, in one of its stages, was discussed and decided on, while Lord Mansfield was present in court, on 7th March 1787. On the following day, he wrote to Mr Gavin Hamilton, concerning it:—"Poor Captain Montgomery is cast. Yesterday it was tried whether the husband could proceed against the unfortunate lover without first divorcing his wife ; and their gravities on the bench were unanimously of opinion that M—— may prosecute for adultery directly, and need not divorce his wife at all if he pleases. O all ye poor of love unfortunate, and friendless woe, pour the balm of sympathising tears on the grief-torn, tender heart of the hapless fair one !"]

R. Chambers has given the explanation that the lady here referred to was the heiress of S——, in Ayrshire, and that, after bearing two children to her husband, she deserted him in June 1783, and cohabited with Captain John Montgomery, of the 93rd regiment of foot. She bore a child to Montgo

¹ Quoted from Pope's "Sappho to Phaon."

ember 1784: but, judging from Burns's expressions, there would seem to have been extenuating circumstances in the conduct of the lady. The conduct of the husband in abstaining from a process of divorce which would have deprived him from the lady's estate, was not generally admired.]

SONG.—SHE'S FAIR AND FAUSE.

SHE'S fair and fause that causes my smart,
 I lo'ed her meikle and lang;
 She's broken her vow, she's broken my heart,
 And I may e'en gae hang.
 A coof* cam in wi' routh † o' gear,‡
 And I hae tint § my dearest dear;
 But Woman is but world's gear,
 Sae let the bonie lass gang.

Whae'er ye be that woman love,
 To this be never blind;
 Nae ferlie|| 'tis tho' fickle she prove,
 A woman has't by kind.
 O Woman lovely, Woman fair!
 An angel form's faun to thy share,
 'Twad been o'er meikle to gien thee mair--
 I mean an angel mind.

The occasion of this little song will be at once apparent by giving the following extract from the record of Marriages in the Scots Magazine, and a quotation from Burns's letter to his friend Cunningham, in relation to:—"13th January 1789. At Edinburgh, Mr Forrest Dewar, Esq., to Miss Anne Stewart, daughter of John Stewart, Esq., of East Craigs."

"Glasgow, 24th January 1789.—My dear Cunningham, when I saw in the last newspaper that a surgeon in Edinburgh was married to a certain simple and accomplished young lady whose name begins with ANNE; a lady with whom I fancy I have the honor of being a little acquainted, I immediately felt for a much esteemed friend of mine. As you are the single person, at least, that ever came within the sphere of my observation of human nature, of a young fellow, dissipated but not debauched, a circumstance that

* cockhead. † large stock. ‡ substance wealth § lost. || wonder.

has ever given me the highest idea of the native qualities of your heart, certain that a disappointment in the tender passion must, to you, be a serious matter. To the hopeful youth, keen on the badger foot of Maor listed under the gaudy banners of ambition, a love-disappointment as such, is an easy business; nay, perhaps he hugs himself on his elbow but to your scanty tribe of mankind, whose souls bear—on the materials—the most elegant impress of the Great Creator, love is deeply into their existence: it is entwined with their very thread of life, myself can affirm, both from bachelor and wedlock experience, that the Alpha and Omega of human enjoyment . . . Without it, life, poor inmates of the cottage, would be a damning gift."

We began this note with an extract from the records of Marriage shall bring it to a close in like manner:—"April 10, 1792.—At Edinburgh Mr Alexander Cunningham, writer, to Miss Agnes Moir, youngest daughter of the late Rev. Henry Moir, minister at Auchertoul." This subject will be resumed when we arrive at another of Burns's songs connected with Cunningham's love-disappointment.]

IMPROMPTU LINES TO CAPTAIN RIDDE

ON RETURNING A NEWSPAPER.

YOUR News and Review, sir,
I've read through and through, sir,
With little admiring or blaming;
The Papers are barren
Of home-news or foreign,
No murders or rapes worth the naming.
Our friends, the Reviewers,
Those chippers and hewers,
Are judges of mortar and stone, sir;
But of *meet* or *unmeet*,
In a fabric complete,
I'll boldly pronounce they are none, sir.

My goose-quill too rude is
To tell all your goodness
Bestow'd on your servant, the Poet;

Would to God I had one
 Like a beam of the sun,
 And then all the world, sir, should know it !

ELLISLAND, *Monday morning.*

These lines tell somewhat of the kindly compliments and familiar intercourse that passed current between the poet and his neighbour at Friars, even so early as this, the first year of their acquaintance. About the same date, a prose note addressed to that gentleman still farther exemplifies his intimacy, and shews when Burns began to transcribe for Mr Riddell the poems which now form one volume of what are known as "Burns's Riddell MSS." in the Athenæum Library at Liverpool.]

POEMS TO JOHN M'MURDO, ESQ., OF DRUM- LANRIG,

SENT WITH SOME OF THE AUTHOR'S POEMS.

O COULD I give thee India's wealth,
 As I this trifle send ;
 Because thy joy in both would be
 To share them with a friend.

But golden sands did never grace
 The Heliconian stream ;
 Then take what gold could never buy—
 An honest bard's esteem.

On the 9th of January, 1789, Burns wrote to this gentleman enclosing what he termed "nearly my newest song, one that has cost me some pains, though that is but an equivocal mark of its excellence." And he adds—"two or three others I have by me, which shall do themselves the honour to wait on you at your leisure."

The poet's intimacy with the neighbouring gentry commenced shortly after his settlement at Ellisland, and the friendship of Mr M'Murdo and his family he enjoyed till the close of his life.]

RHYMING REPLY TO A NOTE FROM CAPTAIN RIDDELL.

DEAR SIR, at ony time or tide,
I'd rather sit wi' you than ride,
Though 'twere wi' royal Geordie :
And trowth, your kindness, soon and late,
Aft gars me to mysel look blate—
The Lord in Heav'n reward ye !

ELLISLAND.

R. BURNS

[The Laird of Carse had arranged to ride out with Burns; but the weather proving unpropitious, he despatched the following to the poet—

“ Dear Bard, to ride this day is vain,
For it will be a steeping rain,
So come and sit wi' me ;
We'll twa-three leaves fill up wi' scraps,
And whyles fill up the time wi' cracks,
And spend the day wi' glee.”—R. R.

Riddell's note apparently bears reference to the unpublished scraps of poetry which Burns had undertaken to insert in a bound volume of paper that Riddell had, in 1789, procured for the purpose.]

TO MISS CRUICKSHANK,

A VERY YOUNG LADY.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A BOOK,
PRESENTED TO HER BY THE AUTHOR.

BEAUTEOUS Rosebud, young and gay,
Blooming on thy early May,
Never may'st thou, lovely flower,
Chilly shrink in sleety shower !
Never Boreas' hoary path,
Never Eurus' pois'nous breath,
Never baleful stellar lights,
Taint thee with untimely blights !

Never, never reptile thief
Riot on thy virgin leaf !
Nor even Sol too fiercely view
Thy bosom blushing still with dew !

May'st thou long, sweet crimson gem,
Richly deck thy native stem ;
Till some ev'ning, sober, calm,
Drooping dew, and breathing balm,
While all around the woodland rings,
And ev'ry bird thy requiem sings ;
Thou, amid the dirgeful sound,
Shed thy dying honours round,
And resign to parent Earth
The loveliest form she e'er gave birth.

Burns paid a brief visit to Edinburgh towards the close of February 1789, the main object being to get a final settlement with Mr Creech, in which he succeeded to his satisfaction. We suppose it was at this time that the above lines of compliment to his favourite little "Rosebud," were composed and printed.

The following announcement in the Scots Magazine refers to the marriage of the young lady to whom the lines were addressed ;—"June 1st 1804—Jedburgh, James Henderson, writer there, to Miss Jane Cruickshank, daughter of the deceased William Cruickshank, High School, Edinburgh."

BEWARE O' BONIE ANN.

YE gallants bright, I rede you right,
Beware o' bonie Ann ;
Her comely face sae fu' o' grace,
Your heart she will trepan :
Her een sae bright, like stars by night,
Her skin is like the swan ;
Sae jimply lac'd, her genty waist,
That sweetly ye might span.

Youth, Grace, and Love attendant move,
 And pleasure leads the van :
 In a' their charms, and conquering arms,
 They wait on bonie Ann.
 The captive bands may chain the hands,
 But love enslaves the man :
 Ye gallants braw, I rede you a',
 Beware o' bonie Ann !

[The young woman whose charms are celebrated in the text became the wife of a medical man residing at Bath, and afterwards in London, near Derbyshire. From a Canadian Obituary, we copy the following:—"On the 19th March 1863. Died at Quebec, Mr Stewart Derbyshire, Her Majesty's printer there. He was the son of Dr Derbyshire of Bath, and his mother was Miss Ann Masterton, daughter of Allan Masterton, writing-master, High School, Edinburgh."]

ODE ON THE DEPARTED REGENCY BILL

DAUGHTER of Chaos' doting years,
 Nurse of ten thousand hopes and fears,
 Whether thy airy, unsubstantial shade
 (The rights of sepulture now duly paid)
 Spread abroad its hideous form
 On the roaring civil storm,
 Deafening din and warring rage
 Factions wild with factions wage ;
 Or under-ground, deep-sunk, profound,
 Among the demons of the earth,
 With groans that make the mountains shake,
 Thou mourn thy ill-starr'd, blighted birth ;
 Or in the uncreated Void,
 Where seeds of future being fight,
 With lessen'd step thou wander wide,
 To greet thy Mother—Ancient Night,
 And as each jarring, monster-mass is past,
 Fond recollect what once thou wast :

In manner due, beneath this sacred oak,
Hear, Spirit, hear ! thy presence I invoke !
By a Monarch's heaven-struck fate,
By a disunited State,
By a generous Prince's wrongs,
By a Senate's strife of tongues,
By a Premier's sullen pride,
Louring on the changing tide ;
By dread Thurlow's powers to awe
Rhetoric, blasphemy and law ;
By the turbulent ocean—
A Nation's commotion,
By the harlot-caresses
Of borough addresses,
By days few and evil,
(Thy portion, poor devil !)
By Power, Wealth and Show,
(The gods by men adored,)
By nameless Poverty,
(Their hell abhorred,)
By all they hope, by all they fear,
Hear ! and Appear !

Stare not on me, thou ghastly Power !
Nor, grim with chained defiance, lour :
No Babel-structure would I build
Where, order exil'd from his native sway
Confusion may the REGENT-sceptre wield.
While all would rule and none obey :
Go, to the world of Man relate
The story of thy sad, eventful fate ;
And call presumptuous Hope to hear
And bid him check his blind career ;
And tell the sore-prest sons of Care,
Never, never to despair !

Paint Charles's speed on wings of fire,
 The object of his fond desire,
 Beyond his boldest hopes, at hand :
 Paint all the triumph of the Portland Band ;
 Mark how they lift the joy-exulting voice,
 And how their num'rous creditors rejoice ;
 But just as hopes to warm enjoyment rise,
 Cry CONVALESCENCE ! and the vision flies.

Then next pourtray a dark'ning twilight gloom,
 Eclipsing sad a gay, rejoicing morn,
 While proud Ambition to th' untimely tomb
 By gnashing, grim, despairing fiends is borne :
 Paint ruin, in the shape of high D[undas]
 Gaping with giddy terror o'er the brow ;
 In vain he struggles, the fates behind him press,
 And clam'rous hell yawns for her prey below :
 How fallen *That*, whose pride late scaled the skies
 And *This*, like Lucifer, no more to rise !
 Again pronounce the powerful word ;
 See Day, triumphant from the night, restored.

Then know this truth, ye Sons of Men !
 (Thus ends thy moral tale,)
 Your darkest terrors may be vain,
 Your brightest hopes may fail.

[In the "Elegy for the year 1788," some reference was made to King's illness, and consequent excitement regarding the appointment of a Regent. From 17th October 1788, when His Majesty was taken ill, a daily report of his condition was published. A form of public prayer for the King's recovery was prepared by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and read in the churches from and after 23d November. In the House of Commons on 8th December, Mr Fox, in seconding the government motion for appointing a committee to enquire and report on the constitutional mode of continuing the executive government under existing circumstances, declared his opinion that there could be no suspension of executive government so long as there existed an Heir-apparent of full age and capacity.

Mr Pitt, in reply, said that this doctrine was, to the last degree, alarming, and he held that it was little short of treason to the constitution. Indeed

considered that the Prince of Wales was, in the present emergency, "no more entitled by right to the administration than any other subject in the kingdom. The right lay with the Parliament alone to appoint a Regent, and if, in its discretion, the Prince of Wales should be selected as the most proper person to represent his Royal Father in the government, the Parliament had a right to fetter the appointment with such limitations and restrictions as were necessary for the preservation of its allegiance to the sovereign, and of the people's interests." Out of these conflicting positions arose that "strife of tongues" in the senate, and "turbulent ocean of a nation's commotion" to which the poet refers in the foregoing Ode. The "Charles" of the third paragraph is Mr Fox, and the "Portland Band" is the Whig party.]

EPISTLE TO JAMES TENNANT OF GLEN- CONNER.

AULD comrade dear, and brither sinner,
 How's a' the folk about Glenconner?
 How do you this blae eastlin wind,
 That's like to blaw a body blind?
 For me, my faculties are frozen,
 My dearest member nearly dozen'd.*
 I've sent you here, by Johnie Simson,
 Twa sage philosophers to glimpse on;
 Smith, wi' his sympathetic feeling,
 An' Reid, to common sense appealing.
 Philosophers have fought and wrangled,
 An' meikle Greek an' Latin mangled,
 Till wi' their logic-jargon tir'd,
 And in the depth of science mir'd,
 To common sense they now appeal,
 What wives and wabsters see and feel.
 But, hark ye, friend! I charge you strictly,
 Peruse them, an' return them quickly:
 For now I'm grown sae cursed douce
 I pray and ponder butt the house;

* benumbed.

My shins, my lane, I there sit roastin,
Perusing Bunyan, Brown an' Boston,
Till by an' by, if I haud on,
I'll grunt a reàl gospel groan :
Already I begin to try it,
To cast my e'en up like a pyet,*
When by the gun she tumbles o'er
Flutt'ring an' gasping in her gore :
Sae shortly you shall see me bright,
A burning an' a shining light.

My heart-warm love to guid auld Glen,
The ace an' wale † of honest men :
When bending down wi' auld grey hairs
Beneath the load of years and cares,
May He who made him still support him,
An' views beyond the grave comfort him ;
His worthy fam'ly far and near,
God bless them a' wi' grace and gear !

My auld schoolfellow, preacher Willie,
The manly tar, my mason-billie,
And Auchenbay, I wish him joy ;
If he's a parent, lass or boy,
May he be *dad*, and Meg the *mith*er,
Just five-and-forty years thegither !
And no forgetting wabster ‡ Charlie,
I'm tauld he offers very fairly.
An' Lord, remember singing Sannock,
Wi' hale breeks, saxpence, an' a bannock !
And next, my auld acquaintance, Nancy,
Since she is fitted to her fancy,
An' her kind stars hae airted § till her
A guid chiel wi' a pickle siller.

* magpie.

† pick.

‡ weaver.

§ directed.

My kindest, best respects, I sen' it,
 To cousin Kate, an' sister Janet :
 Tell them, frae me, wi' chieles * be cautious,
 For, faith, they'll aiblins † fin' them fashious ; ‡
 To grant a heart is fairly civil,
 But to grant a maidenhead's the devil.
 An' lastly, Jamie, for yoursel,
 May guardian angels tak a spell,
 An' steer you seven miles south o' hell :
 But first, before you see heaven's glory,
 May ye get mony a merry story,
 Mony a laugh, and mony a drink,
 And ay eneugh o' needfu' clink.§

Now fare ye weel, an' joy be wi' you :
 For my sake, this I beg it o' you,
 Assist poor Simson a' ye can,
 Ye'll fin' him just an honest man ;
 Sae I conclude, and quat my chanter,
 Your's, saint or sinner,

ROB THE RANTER.

[This Epistle was addressed to the son of "guid auld Glen," to whom the poet refers in his letter to Robert Muir, of 7th March 1788 :—"I took old Glenconner with me to Mr Miller's farm ; and he was so pleased with it that I have wrote an offer to Mr Miller, which, if he accepts, shall make him sit down a plain farmer—the happiest of lives when a man can live by it."

Glenconner is in the parish of Ochiltree. "Auld Glen," whose name was John, was twice married. His son, James, to whom this epistle is addressed, was of the first family, while "Preacher Willie" and "Wabster Charlie" were by the second marriage. Willie was subsequently known for his history of Hindostan, and Charlie became the founder of the famous chemical works of St Rollox, Glasgow. The "manly tar, my mason-billie" was David Tennant, who latterly lived in Swansea, Wales.

The late John Tennant, of St Rollox, was the son of "Wabster Charlie," and his son is Charles Tennant, Esq. of The Glen, Peeblesshire. The latter gentleman possesses a book which was presented by Burns to "guid auld Glen" on 20th Dec. 1786, with holograph inscription, thus : "A paltry present from Robert Burns, the Scotch Bard, to his own friend, and his father's friend, John Tennant, in Glenconner."]

* lads.

† perhaps.

‡ troublesome.

§ money.

A NEW PSALM FOR THE CHAPEL OF KILMARNOCK,

ON THE THANKSGIVING-DAY FOR HIS MAJESTY'S
RECOVERY.

As I am not devoutly attached to a certain monarch, I cannot say that my heart ran any risk of bursting, on Thursday was se'ennight, with struggling emotions of gratitude. God forgive me for speaking evil dignities! but I must say, that I look on the whole business as a sole farce of pageant mummery. The following are a few stanzas of new Psalmody for that "joyful solemnity" which I sent to a London newspaper with the date and preface following:—'Kilmarnock, 25th April. Mr Printer In a certain chapel, not fifty leagues from the market cross of this good town, the following stanzas of Psalmody, it is said, were composed for, and devoutly sung on, the late joyful solemnity of the 23rd.'—*Letter to Mr Dunlop, 4th May 1789.*

O SING a new song to the Lord,
Make, all and every one,
A joyful noise, even for the king
His restoration.

The sons of Belial in the land
Did set their heads together;
Come, let us sweep them off, said they,
Like an o'erflowing river.

They set their heads together, I say,
They set their heads together;
On right, on left, on every hand,
We saw none to deliver.

Thou madest strong two chosen ones,
To quell the Wicked's pride;
That Young Man, great in Issachar,
The burden-bearing tribe.

And him, among the Princes. chief
In our Jerusalem,

The judge that's mighty in thy law,
The man that fears thy name.

Yet they, even they, with all their strength.
Began to faint and fail ;
Even as two howling, ravenous wolves
To dogs do turn their tail.

Th' ungodly o'er the just prevail'd,
For so thou hadst appointed ;
That thou might'st greater glory give
Unto thine own anointed.

And now thou hast restored our State,
Pity our Kirk also ;
For she by tribulations
Is now brought every low.

Consume that high-place Patronage,
From off thy holy hill ;
And in thy fury burn the book—
Even of that man M'Gill.¹

Now hear our prayer, accept our song,
And fight thy chosen's battle :
We seek but little, Lord, from thee ,
Thou kens we get as little.

[The day of National Thanksgiving for the king's recovery was appointed for Thursday 23rd April, and for greater solemnity His Majesty had resolved to go to St Paul's Cathedral to return thanks to God for the great mercy which had been extended to him. It was accordingly ordered that both Houses of Parliament should attend His Majesty at St Paul's on said occasion. The procession to and from St Paul's Cathedral, and the service there, were of the most magnificent description. From the reading of the accounts hereof, Burns was led to indite the foregoing parody of one of the Scotch

¹ Dr Wm. M'Gill of Ayr, who published in 1784 an essay on the death of Jesus Christ, of a Socinian tendency, which was condemned by the evangelical party as heretical.

metrical psalms. The "Young Man, great in Issachar" is undoubtedly the Premier, William Pitt, and the "Judge that's mighty in the law" must be the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, with his

"——— powers to awe,
His rhetoric, blasphemy and law."

SKETCH IN VERSE.

INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON. C. J. FOX.

How Wisdom and Folly meet, mix, and unite,
How Virtue and Vice blend their black and their white,
How Genius, th' illustrious father of fiction,
Confounds rule and law, reconciles contradiction,
I sing : If these mortals, the critics, should bustle,
I care not, not I—let the critics go whistle.

But now for a Patron, whose name and whose glory,
At once may illustrate and honor my story.

Thou first of our orators, first of our wits ;
Yet whose parts and acquirements seem just lucky hits
With knowledge so vast, and with judgment so strong,
No man with the half of 'em e'er could go wrong ;
With passions so potent, and fancies so bright,
No man with the half of 'em e'er could go right ;
A sorry, poor, misbegot son of the Muses,
For using thy name, offers fifty excuses.

Good L—d, what is Man ! for as simple he looks,
Do but try to develop his hooks and his crooks ;
With his depths and his shallows, his good and his evil,
All in all he's a problem must puzzle the devil.

On his one ruling passion Sir Pope hugely labors,
That, like th' old Hebrew walking-switch, eats up its
neighbours :

Man kind are his show-box—a friend, would you know
him?

Pl the string, Ruling passion the picture will show him.

What pity, in rearing so beauteous a system,

Of trifling particular, *Truth*, should have miss'd him ;

For, spite of his fine theoretic positions,

Man kind is a science defies definitions.

Some sort all our qualities each to its tribe,

And think human nature they truly describe ;

Have you found this, or t'other? There's more in the
wind ;

And by one drunken fellow his comrades you'll find.

For such is the flaw, or the depth of the plan,

And the make of that wonderful creature called Man ;

Not two virtues, whatever relation they claim,

Not even two different shades of the same.

Tough like as was ever twin brother to brother,

Assessing the one shall imply you've the other.

But truce with abstraction, and truce with a Muse

Whose rhymes you'll perhaps, Sir, ne'er deign to peruse :

Will you leave your justings, your jars, and your quarrels,

Attending with Billy for proud-nodding laurels ?

For much-honor'd Patron, believe your poor poet,

Your courage, much more than your prudence, you
show it :

In vain with Squire Billy for laurels you struggle ;

I'll have them by fair trade, if not, he will smuggle :

Not cabinets even of kings would conceal 'em,

But up the back-stairs, and by G— he would steal 'em !

Ten feats like Squire Billy's you ne'er can achieve 'em ;

It is not, out-do him—the task is, out-thieve him !

The foregoing "Essay on Man," not quite in the manner of Pope, was
originally transcribed to Mrs Dunlop in the same letter of 4th May 1789, in
which he gave her the preceding "Stanzas of new Psalmody." In reference

to this poem he writes:—"I have another poetic whim in my head, I at present dedicate, or rather inscribe, to the Right Hon. C. J. Fox how long that fancy may hold I cannot say."

The London Newspaper referred to by the poet was "The Edinburgh Star," edited by Peter Stuart, who had corresponded with Burns in 1788 on the subject of his headstone to Fergusson the poet.]

THE WOUNDED HARE.

"I have just put the last hand to a little poem, which I think something to your taste. One morning lately, as I was out pretty early in the fields, sowing some grass-seeds, I heard the burst of a shot in a neighbouring plantation, and presently a poor little wounded hare limping by me. You will guess my indignation at the inhuman fellow could shoot a hare at this season, when all of them have young. Indeed, there is something in this business of destroying, for our individuals in the animal creation that do not injure us materially, which we could never reconcile to my ideas of virtue."—*Letter to Alex. Cunningham, 4th May, 1789.*

INHUMAN man ! curse on thy barb'rous art,
And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye ;
May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,
Nor never pleasure glad thy cruel heart !

Go live, poor wand'rer of the wood and field !
The bitter little that of life remains :
No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains
To thee a home, or food, or pastime yield.

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest,
No more of rest, but now thy dying bed !
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.

Perhaps a mother's anguish adds its woe ;
The playful pair crowd fondly by thy side ;
Ah ! helpless nurslings, who will now provide
That life a mother only can bestow !

as by winding Nith I, musing, wait
 the sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,
 I miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
 I curse the ruffian's arm, and mourn thy hapless fate.

The author submitted this little poem to the critical judgment of his friend Dr Gregory of Edinburgh. Burns was rather "taken aback" by his criticism, for in a letter he wrote soon after he says—"Dr Gregory is a good fellow but he crucifies me. I believe in his iron justice; but, like the devils, I weep and tremble."]

DELIA, AN ODE

To the Editor of *The Star*.—Mr Printer—If the productions of a simple ploughman can merit a place in the same paper with Sylvester Otway, and other favourites of the Muses who illuminate the *Star* with the lustre of genius, your insertion of the enclosed trifle will be succeeded by future communications from—Yours, &c.,
 R. BURNS.
Island, near Dumfries, 18th May, 1789."

FAIR the face of orient day,
 Fair the tints of op'ning rose;
 But fairer still my Delia dawns,
 More lovely far her beauty shows.

Sweet the lark's wild warbled lay,
 Sweet the tinkling rill to hear;
 But, Delia, more delightful still,
 Steal thine accents on mine ear.

The flower-enamour'd, busy bee
 The rosy banquet loves to sip;
 Sweet the streamlet's limpid laps
 To the sun-brown'd Arab's lip.

But, Delia, on thy balmy lips
 Let me, no vagrant insect, rove;
 O let me steal one liquid kiss,
 For, Oh! my soul is parch'd with love.

This poem, so very unlike a composition of Burns, with the letter to the Editor of the *Star* which accompanies it, is surrounded with great sus-

picion. It first appeared in a Memoir of Burns, produced in London for "The Society of Ancient Scots." The editor of Wm. Clark's edition of Burns, 1831, omits the verses on the ground that they are not by Burns, but "a translation of an anonymous Latin poem." Cunningham places in his edition to both the letter and the verses; but never expresses his "suspicion that they are not by Burns." Chambers takes them as genuine, and repeats a tradition to the effect that the poem was produced almost impromptu at Brownhill inn, in answer to a challenge to his power to compose effeminate verses.]

THE GARD'NER WI' HIS PAIDLE.

Tune—"The Gardener's March."

WHEN rosy May comes in wi' flowers,
To deck her gay, green-spreading bowers,
Then busy, busy are his hours,
The Gard'ner wi' his paidle.

The crystal waters gently fa',
The merry bards are lovers a',
The scented breezes round him blaw—
The Gard'ner wi' his paidle.

When purple morning starts the hare
To steal upon her early fare;
Then thro' the dew he maun repair—
The Gard'ner wi' his paidle.

When day, expiring in the west,
The curtain draws o' Nature's rest,
He flies to her arms he lo'es best,
The Gard'ner wi' his paidle.

[A few years after this time, Burns deprived the Gardeners of the honour of this song by altering it to suit the air "Dainty Davie" for George Thomson's collection. This was done by adding a chorus, and changing the closing line of each stanza; but in other respects the two songs are nearly identical.]

ON A BANK OF FLOWERS.

ON a bank of flowers in a summer day,
For summer lightly drest,
The youthful, blooming Nelly lay,
With love and sleep opprest ;
When Willie, wand'ring thro' the wood,
Who for her favour oft had sued :
He gaz'd, he wish'd,
He fear'd, he blush'd,
And trembled where he stood.

Her closèd eyes, like weapons sheath'd,
Were seal'd in soft repose ;
Her lips, still as she fragrant breath'd,
It richer dyed the rose ;
The springing lilies, sweetly prest,
Wild-wanton kiss'd her rival breast ;
He gaz'd, he wish'd,
He fear'd, he blush'd,
His bosom ill at rest.

Her robes light-waving in the breeze,
Her tender limbs embrace ;
Her lovely form, her native ease,
All harmony and grace ;
Tumultuous tides his pulses roll,
A faltering, ardent kiss he stole ;
He gaz'd, he wished,
He fear'd, he blushed,
And sigh'd his very soul.

As flies the partridge from the brake,
On fear-inspired wings,
So Nelly starting, half-awake,
Away affrighted springs ;

But Willie, follow'd—as he should,
 He overtook her in the wood ;
 He vow'd, he pray'd,
 He found the maid
 Forgiving all and good.

[This is merely a new versification of an old song by Mr Theobald, to a beautiful air by a German musician (John E. Gaillard), which became popular in Scotland as to find its way into the list of Scotch tunes. The author has compressed the older version, and rendered the lyric much more modern. The original may be found in Ramsay's "Tea-table Miscellany."]

YOUNG JOCKIE WAS THE BLYTHEST LAD

YOUNG Jockie was the blythest lad,
 In a' our town or here awa ;
 Fu' blythe he whistled at the gaud,
 Fu' lightly danc'd he in the ha' :

He roos'd my een sae bonie blue,
 He roos'd my waist sae genty sma' ;
 An' ay my heart cam to my mou,
 When ne'er a body heard or saw.

My Jockie toils upon the plain,
 Thro' wind and weet, thro' frost and snaw ;
 And o'er the lea I leuk fu' fain,
 When Jockie's owsen hameward ca'.

An' aye the night comes round again,
 When in his arms he taks me a' ;
 An ay he vows he'll be my ain,
 As lang as he has breath to draw.

[This fine love-song was composed to suit an air in Oswald's Poet's Companion, having the same title ; and Stenhouse informs us that, with the exception of three or four lines, the words in the text are entirely new.]

THE BANKS OF NITH.

THE Thames flows proudly to the sea,
Where royal cities stately stand ;
But sweeter flows the Nith to me,
Where Comyns ance had high command.
When shall I see that honor'd land,
That winding stream I love so dear !
Must wayward Fortune's adverse hand
For ever, ever keep me here !

How lovely, Nith, thy fruitful vales,
Where bounding hawthorns gayly bloom ;
And sweetly spread thy sloping dales,
Where lambkins wanton through the broom.
Tho' wandering now must be my doom,
Far from thy bonie banks and braes,
May there my latest hours consume,
Among the friends of early days !

his song, intended to depict the feelings of a native of Nithsdale residing in London, reflecting on his youthful associations of "Auld Langsyne," composed to fit a melody by Captain Riddell, in the measure of "Goodnight and joy be wi' ye a'."—"You will see"—he afterwards wrote to his friend the Colonel of Crochallan—"by looking into the third volume of *Jason*, that I have contributed my mite there."]

JAMIE, COME TRY ME

Chorus.—Jamie, come try me,
Jamie, come try me,
If thou would win my love,
Jamie, come try me.

If thou should ask my love,
Could I deny thee?

If thou would win my love,
 Jamie, come try me !
 Jamie, come try me, &c.

If thou should kiss me, love,
 Wha could espy thee ?
 If thou wad be my love,
 Jamie, come try me !
 Jamie, come try me, &c.

[These stanzas are set in Johnson's Museum to a melody by Oswald which, when tested, is found to be merely a violin variation of the tenor old Scottish air, "I'll never leave thee."]

I LOVE MY LOVE IN SECRET.

My Sandy gied to me a ring,
 Was a' beset wi' diamonds fine ;
 But I gied him a far better thing,
 I gied my heart in pledge o' his ring.

Chorus.—My Sandy O, my Sandy O,
 My bonie, bonie Sandy O ;
 Tho' the love that I owe
 To thee I dare na show,
 Yet I love my love in secret, my Sandy O.

My Sandy brak a piece o' gowd,
 While down his cheeks the saut tears row'd ;
 He took a hauf, and gaed it to me.
 And I'll keep it till the hour I die.
 My Sandy O, &c.

[Although this snatch reads little better than doggrel, the hand of Burns is visible in it. The old words were very impure, and it was necessary to preserve the sprightly air. The last stanza records a very interesting old custom between lovers when fated to undergo a temporary separation—the

making of a piece of gold or silver, one half of which was retained by each party until sundered hands and hearts could permanently join. The old song of "Logie o' Buchan," refers to the same practice—

"He had but ae saxpence, he brak it in twa,
An' gae me the hauf o't when he gaed awa."

SWEET TIBBIE DUNBAR.

O WILT thou go wi' me, sweet Tibbie Dunbar?
O wilt thou go wi' me, sweet Tibbie Dunbar?
Wilt thou ride on a horse, or be drawn in a car,
Or walk by my side, O sweet Tibbie Dunbar?

I care na thy daddie, his lands and his money,
I care na thy kin, sae high and sae lordly;
But sae that thou'lt hae me for better or waur,
And come in thy coatie, sweet Tibbie Dunbar.

This is entirely by Burns, written with a view to preserve an air he much admired, called "Johnie M'Gill," after its supposed composer, John M'Gill, [Irish fiddler]

THE CAPTAIN'S LADY.

Chorus.—O mount and go, mount and make ye ready,
O mount and go, and be the Captain's lady.

When the drums do beat, and the cannons rattle,
Thou shalt sit in state, and see thy love in battle:
When the drums do beat, and the cannons rattle,
Thou shalt sit in state, and see thy love in battle.
O mount and go, &c.

When the vanquish'd foe sues for peace and quiet
To the shades we'll go, and in love enjoy it:

When the vanquish'd foe sues for peace an quiet,
 To the shades we'll go, and in love enjoy it.
 O mount and go, &c.

[Stenhouse, who had an opportunity of inspecting Johnson's manuscript, informs us that these words are by Burns, and we can well believe it, they evince his usual force. The following will give an idea of the words :—

Chorus.—I will away, and I will not tarry,
 I will away, and be a Captain's lady.

A Captain's lady fair, she is a dame of honour,
 And she has got her maids ay to wait upon her :
 Ay to wait upon her, and get a' things ready,
 So I will away and be a Captain's lady.
 I will away, &c.

The song was very popular during the Duke of Marlborough's time, and incessant warfare of that period.]

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.

JOHN Anderson, my jo, John,
 When we were first acquaint ;
 Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonie brow was brent ;*
 But now your brow is beld, John,
 Your locks are like the snaw ;
 But blessings on your frosty pow,†
 John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither ;
 And mony a cantie ‡ day, John,
 We've had wi' ane anither :
 Now we maun totter down, John,
 And hand in hand we'll go,

* smooth.

† head.

‡ cheerful.

And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

[This gem has been sadly abused by admiring versifiers, who, in the vain hope to render it more complete by adding stanzas of their own, have only set up a foil to increase the brightness of Burns's classic production. Dr Currie, in 1880, raised his protest against a so-called "Improved" version of this song which had been given in the first volume of a collection entitled *Poetry, original and selected*," printed by Brash and Reid, of Glasgow.]

MY LOVE, SHE'S BUT A LASSIE YET.

My love, she's but a lassie yet,
My love, she's but a lassie yet ;
We'll let her stand a year or twa,
She'll no be hauf sae saucy yet ;
I rue the day I sought her O !
I rue the day I sought her O !
Wha gets her need na say he's woo'd,
But he may say he has bought her O.

Come draw a drap o' the best o't yet,
Come draw a drap o' the best o't yet ;
Gae seek for pleasure whar you will,
But here I never miss'd it yet,
We're a' dry wi' drinkin o't,
We're a' dry wi' drinkin o't ;
The minister kiss't the fiddler's wife ;
He could na preach for thinkin o't.

[Stenhouse claims the title and the four concluding lines of this remarkable litty as ancient; and the remainder, he assures us, is the composition of Burns.]

SONG.—TAM GLEN.

My heart is a breaking, dear Tittie,
Some counsel unto me come len',
To anger them a' is a pity,
But what will I do wi' Tam Glen ?

I'm thinking, wi' sic a braw fellow,
In poortith I might mak a fen' ;
What care I in riches to wallow,
If I manna marry Tam Glen !

There's Lowrie the Laird o' Dumeller—
"Gude day to you"—brute ! he comes ben :
He brags and he blaws o' his siller,
But when will he dance like Tam Glen !

My Minnie does constantly deave me,
And bids me beware o' young men ;
They flatter, she says, to deceive me,
But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen !

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him,
He'd gie me gude hunder marks ten ;
But, if it's ordain'd I maun take him,
O wha will I get but Tam Glen !

Yestreen at the Valentine's dealing,
My heart to my mou gied a sten ;
For thrice I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written "Tam Glen" !

The last Halloween I was waukin
My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken,
His likeness came up the house staukin,
And the very grey breeks o' Tam Glen !

Come, counsel, dear Tittie, don't tarry ;
I gie ye my bonie black hen,
Gif ye will advise me to marry
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

[This has, from the day of its first publication, been considered one of the happiest of its author's humorous songs. Dr Waddell well observes that "feminine love and logic were never more admirably combined, and the moral elevated for ever above the base *commercial* idea of matrimony."]]

CARLE, AN THE KING COME.

Chorus.—Carle,* an the King come,
Carle, an the King come,
Thou shalt dance and I will sing,
Carle, an the King come.

An somebody were come again,
Then somebody maun cross the main,
And every man shall hae his ain,
Carle, an the King come,
Carle, an the King come, &c.

I trow we swappet † for the worse,
We gie the boot ‡ and better horse ;
An that we'll tell them at the cross,
Carle, an the King come,
Carle, an the King come, &c.

Coggie, § an the King come,
Coggie, an the King come,
I'se be fou, || an' thou'se be toom ¶
Coggie, an the King come.
Coggie, an the King come, &c.

[This is an old song, dating from the period of the Cromwell Interregnum, essed up by Burns, whose improvements are very apparent on comparing with any version of the song printed before the year 1789.]

THE LADDIE'S DEAR SEL'.

THERE'S a youth in this city, it were a great pity
That he from our lasses should wander awa' ;
For he's bonie and braw, weel-favor'd witha',
An' his hair has a natural buckle an' a'.

* old man.

§ drinking-cup.

† exchanged.

|| well-filled.

‡ something added.

¶ empty.

His coat is the hue o' his bonnet sae blue,
 His fecket * is white as the new-driven snaw ;
 His hose they are blae,† and his shoon like the slae,
 And his clear siller buckles, they dazzle us a'.

For beauty and fortune the laddie's been courtin ;
 Weel-featur'd, weel-tocher'd,‡ weel-mounted an' bray
 But chiefly the siller that gars him gang till her,
 The penny's the jewel that beautifies a'.

There's Meg wi' the mailen § that fain wad a haen him
 And Susie, wha's daddie was laird o' the Ha' ;
 There's lang-tocher'd † Nancy maist fetters his fancy,
 But the laddie's dear sel, he loes dearest of a'.

[The poet's note to Glenriddell's copy says—"The first half-stanza of the song is old, and the rest is mine."]

WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T.

FIRST when Maggie was my care,
 Heav'n, I thought, was in her air,
 Now we're married—speir || nae mair,
 But whistle o'er the lave ¶ o't !
 Meg was meek, and Meg was mild,
 Sweet and harmless as a child—
 Wiser men than me's beguill'd ;
 Whistle o'er the lave o't !

How we live, my Meg and me,
 How we love, and how we gree,
 I care na by how few may see—
 Whistle o'er the lave o't !

* an under-vest of white wool.

§ farm.

† pale blue.

|| enquire.

‡ dowered.

¶ remainder.

Wha I wish were maggot's meat,
 Dish'd up in her winding-sheet,
 I could write—but Meg may see—
 Whistle o'er the lave o't!

This favourite song was written by Burns as a substitute for some witty and indelicate verses preserved in Herd's Collection.]

MY EPPIE ADAIR.

Chorus.—AN' O my Eppie, my jewel, my Eppie,
 Wha wad na be happy wi' Eppie Adair?

By love, and by beauty, by law, and by duty,
 I swear to be true to my Eppie Adair!

By love, and by beauty, by law, and by duty,
 I swear to be true to my Eppie Adair!

And O my Eppie, &c.

A' pleasure exile me, dishonor defile me,
 If e'er I beguile ye, my Eppie Adair!

A' pleasure exile me, dishonor defile me,
 If e'er I beguile thee, my Eppie Adair!

And O my Eppie, &c.

[These words were supplied to fit a very beautiful melody by Oswald, which appears in his "Pocket Companion," under the title of "My Eppie."]

EPIGRAM ON FRANCIS GROSE THE ANTIQUARY.

THE Devil got notice that Grose was a-dying,
 So whip! at the summons, old Satan came flying;
 But when he approach'd where poor Francis lay
 moaning,
 And saw each bed-post with its burthen a-groaning,

Astonish'd, confounded, cries Satan—'By G—,
I'll want him ere take such a damnable load !'

[This Epigram was published in the *Scots Magazine* for June 1769. Grose was born in 1740, and at his death was fifty-one years of age. His father was a wealthy jeweller, resident at Richmond, and died in 1769. In early life, Grose held a commission as Captain in the Surrey Militia, which he became Adjutant and Paymaster. His personal extravagance and careless bookkeeping caused him to resign that post, and his pecuniary difficulties having roused his latent talents for antiquarian research, his after-life was devoted to literature. He married, and had his head-quarters at Canterbury, where he obtained a great reputation for wit and sociality, and it is pleasing to be told by his biographer, that "when he set the table in a roar, it was never at the expense of virtue or good manners."]

ON THE
LATE CAPTAIN GROSE'S
PEREGRINATIONS THRO' SCOTLAND, COLLECTING THE
ANTIQUITIES OF THAT KINGDOM.

HEAR, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkir¹ to Johnie Groat's ;—
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede * you tent † it :
A chield's amang you takin notes,
And faith he'll prent it :

If in your bounds ye chance to light
Upon a fine, fat, fodge[‡] wight,
O' stature short, but genius bright,
That's he, mark weel ;
And wow ! he has an unco sleight §
O' cauk and keel.||

* advise.

§ uncommon skill.

† pay attention to.

|| white and red chalk for drawing.

‡ squat, thick-set.

¹ Kirkmaiden, in Wigtonshire, the most southerly parish in Scotland.

By some auld, houlet-haunted biggin,*¹
 Or kirk deserted by its riggin,†
 It's ten to ane ye'll find him snug in
 Some eldritch ‡ part,
 Wi' deils, they say, L—d save's ! colleaguin
 At some black art.

Ilk ghaist that haunts auld ha' or chaumer,
 Ye gipsy-gang that deal in glamour,§
 And you, deep-read in hell's black grammar,
 Warlocks and witches ;
 Ye'll quake at his conjuring hammer,
 Ye midnight bitches.

It's tauld he was a sodger bred,
 And ane wad rather fa'n || than fled ;
 But now he's quat the spurtle-blade, ¶
 And dog-skin wallet,
 And taen the—Antiquarian trade,
 I think they call it.

He has a fouth ** o' auld nick-nackets :
 Rusty airn †† caps and jinglin jackets,²
 Wad haud ‡‡ the Lothians three in tackets, §§
 A towmont |||| gude ;
 And parritch-pats and auld saut-backets, ¶¶
 Before the Flood.

Of Eve's first fire he has a cinder ;
 Auld Tubalcain's fire-shool *** and fender ;

owl-haunted structure.	† roof.	‡ fear-inspiring.	§ witchcraft.
fallen.	¶ quitted the sword.	** large quantity.	
iron.	‡‡ keep.	§§ shoe nails.	
twelvemonth.	¶¶ salt-boxes	*** fire-shovel.	

Vide his *Antiquities of Scotland*.—*R. B.*, 1793.

Vide his treatise on ancient armour and weapons.—*R. B.*, 1793.

That which distinguishèd the gender
 O' Balaam's ass :
 A broomstick o' the witch of Endor,
 Weel shod* wi' brass.

Forbye,† he'll shape you aff fu' gleg ‡
 The cut of Adam's philibeg ;§
 The knife that nicket Abel's craig
 He'll prove you fully,
 It was a faulding jocteleg,¹
 Or lang-kail gullie.

But wad ye see him in his glee,
 For meikle glee and fun has he,
 Then set him down, and twa or three
 Gude fellows wi' him :
 And *port*, O *port* ! shine thou a wee,
 And then ye'll see him !

Now, by the Pow'rs o' verse and prose !
 Thou art a dainty chield, O Grose !—
 Whae'er o' thee shall ill suppose,
 They sair misca' thee ;
 I'd take the rascal by the nose,
 Wad say, "Shame fa' thee."

[This poem, with a few verbal variations, and curtailed of one stanza appeared in the *Scots Magazine* for November 1791. Grose's work on the "Antiquities of England and Wales" was commenced in 1773, and in 1787 the entire work was reprinted in eight volumes. He also produced several subsidiary works, such as his "Military Antiquities," and "A Treatise on Ancient Armour," prior to his labours in Scotland, from 1789 to 1791. His "Antiquities of Scotland" was completed in 1791, in two volumes, compris-

* mounted with brass.

† Besides.

‡ cleverly.

§ kilt.

¹ The etymology of this word was unknown till recently, when an old knife was found with the cutler's name marked 'Jacques de Liege.' Thus it is in exact analogy with 'Andrea di Ferrara. —*Lord Hailes*.

1890 views with letterpress. In May of that year he arrived in Dublin with the object of executing a similar antiquarian work for Ireland; but shortly after his arrival, he was seized with an apoplectic fit which carried him off on the 12th of that month.

THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND'S ALARM.

A BALLAD.

Tune—"Come rouse, Brother Sportsmen!"

ORTHODOX! orthodox, who believe in John Knox,
Let me sound an alarm to your conscience :
Heretic blast has been blown in the West,
That "what is no sense must be nonsense,"
Orthodox! That "what is no sense must be nonsense."

Doctor Mac! Doctor Mac, you should streek on a rack,
To strike evil-doers wi' terror :
To join Faith and Sense, upon any pretence,
Was heretic, damnable error,
Doctor Mac! ¹ 'Twas heretic, damnable error.

Town of Ayr! town of Ayr, it was rash, I declare,
To meddle wi' mischief a-brewing,²
Provost John³ is still deaf to the Church's relief,
And Orator Bob⁴ is its ruin,
Town of Ayr! Yes, Orator Bob is its ruin.

D'rymple mild! D'rymple mild, tho' your heart's like a
child's,
And your life like the new-driven snaw,
Let that winna save you, auld Satan must have you,
For preaching that three's ane an' twa,
D'rymple mild!⁵ For preaching that three's ane an' twa.

¹ Dr M'Gill, Ayr.—*R. B.*

² See the advertisement.—*R. B.*

³ John Ballantine.—*R. B.*

⁴ Robert Aitken.—*R. B.*

⁵ Dr Dalrymple, Ayr.—*R. B.*

Calvin's sons ! Calvin's sons, seize your spiritual gun
 Ammunition you never can need ;
 Your hearts are the stuff will be powder enough,
 And your skulls are a storehouse o' lead,
 Calvin's sons ! Your skulls are a storehouse o' lead.

Rumble John ! rumble John, mount the steps with a
 groan,
 Cry, "the Book is with heresy cramm'd ;"
 Then out wi' your ladle, deal brimstone like aidle,
 And roar ev'ry note of the D—'d,
 Rumble John !¹ And roar ev'ry note of the D—'d.

Simper James ! simper James, leave your fair Killie dandies,
 There's a holier chase in your view :
 I'll lay on your head, that the pack you'll soon lead,
 For puppies like you there's but few,
 Simper James !² For puppies like you there's but few

Singet* Sawnie ! singet Sawnie, are ye huiridin† the pen,
 Unconscious what danger awaits ?
 With a jump, yell, and howl, alarm ev'ry soul,
 For Hannibal's just at your gates,
 Singet Sawnie !³ For Hannibal's just at your gates.

Poet Willie ! poet Willie, gie the Doctor a volley,
 Wi' your "Liberty's Chain" and your wit ;
 O'er Pegasus' side ye ne'er laid a stride,
 Ye but smelt, man, the place where he sh-t,
 Poet Willie !⁴ Ye but smelt, man, the place where he sh

* puny, shrivelled.

† hoarding, saving.

¹ John Russell, Kilmarnock.—*R. B.*

² James Mackinlay, Kilmarnock.—*R. B.*

³ Alexander Moodie of Riccarton.—*R. B.*

⁴ William Peebles, in Newton-upon-Ayr, a poetaster, who, among many other things, published an ode on the Centenary of the Revolution, in which was the line,

"And bound in Liberty's endearing chain."—*R. B.*

Barr Steenie! Barr Steenie, what mean ye? what mean ye?
 If ye meddle nae mair wi' the matter,
 Ye may hae some pretence, man, to havins and sense,
 man,

Wi' people that ken ye nae better,
 Barr Steenie!¹ Wi' people that ken ye nae better.

Jamie Goose! Jamie Goose, ye made but toom roose,*
 In hunting the wicked Lieutenant;
 But the Doctor's your mark, for the L—d's holy ark,
 He has cooper'd an' ca'd a wrang pin in't,
 Jamie Goose!² He has cooper'd an' ca'd a wrang pin in't.

Davie Bluster! Davie Bluster, for a saint if ye muster,
 The core is no nice o' recruits;
 Yet to worth let's be just, royal blood ye might boast,
 If the Ass were the king o' the brutes,
 Davie Bluster!³ If the Ass were the king o' the brutes.

Cessnock-side! Cessnock-side, wi' your turkey-cock pride,
 Of manhood but sma' is your share:
 Ye've the figure, 'tis true, ev'n your foes maun allow,
 And your friends dare na say ye hae mair,
 Cessnock-side!⁴ And your friends dare na say ye hae mair.

Muirland Jock! muirland Jock, when the L—d makes a
 rock,
 To crush common-sense for her sins;
 If ill-manners were wit, there's no mortal so fit
 To confound the poor Doctor at ance,
 Muirland Jock!⁵ To confound the poor Doctor at ance.

* empty boast.

¹ Stephen Young, of Barr.—*R. B.*

² James Young, in New Cumnock, who had lately been foiled in an ecclesiastical prosecution against a Lieutenant Mitchel.—*R. B.*

³ David Grant, Ochiltree.—*R. B.* ⁴ George Smith, Galston.—*R. B.*

⁵ John Shepherd, Muirkirk.—*R. B.*

Andro Gowk ! Andro Gowk, ye may slander the Bo,
 An' the Book nought the waur, let me tell ye ;
 Tho' ye're rich, an' look big, yet, lay by hat an' wig,
 An' ye'll hae a calf's-head o' sma' value,
 Andro Gowk !¹ Ye'll hae a calf's-head o' sma' value

Daddy Auld ! daddie Auld, there's a tod * in the fau
 A tod meikle waur than the clerk ;
 Tho' ye do little skaith,† ye'll be in at the death,
 For gif ye canna bite, ye may bark,
 Daddy Auld !² Gif ye canna bite, ye may bark.

Holy Will ! holy Will, there was wit in your skull,
 When ye pilfer'd the alms o' the poor ;
 The timmer is scant when ye're taen for a saunt,
 Wha should swing in a rape for an hour,
 Holy Will !³ Ye should swing in a rape for an hour.

Poet Burns ! poet Burns, wi' your priest-skelpin turns
 Why desert ye your auld native shire ?
 Your muse is a gipsy, yet were she e'en tipsy,
 She could ca' us nae waur than we are,
 Poet Burns ! She could ca' us nae waur than we are.

PRESENTATION STANZAS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Factor John ! Factor John, whom the L—d made alor
 And ne'er made anither, thy peer,
 Thy poor servant, the Bard, in respectful regard,
 He presents thee this token sincere,
 Factor John ! He presents thee this token sincere.

* fox.

† hurt.

¹ Dr Andrew Mitchel, Monkton.—*R. B.*

² William Auld, Mauchline ; for the clerk, see " Holy Willie's Prayer " —*R. B.*

³ *Vide* the " Prayer " of this saint.—*R. B.*

Afton's Laird ! Afton's Laird, when your pen can be
spared,

A copy of this I bequeath,

In the same sicker score as I mention'd before,

To that trusty auld worthy, Clackleith,

Afton's Laird ! To that trusty auld worthy, Clackleith.

[The history of the foregoing satire may be briefly stated thus:—Dr William M'Gill, one of the two ministers of the parochial charge of Ayr, had published, in 1786, an *Essay on the Death of Christ*, the doctrines of which were reckoned unscriptural by the evangelical party in the Church. It provoked much severe criticism; but its author remained silent, till a neighbouring minister, Dr William Peebles, in preaching a centenary sermon on the Revolution, on 5th November 1788, denounced the essay as heretical, and its author as one who received the privileges of the church with one hand, and stabbed her with the other. M'Gill published a defence; but on 15th April 1789, a complaint of his non-orthodoxy was lodged with the Synod. The case came before the General Assembly in May following; and by a deliverance of that Court, a remit was ordered to be made to a committee of fifteen ministers and ten elders to draw up an abstract of objectionable passages from Dr M'Gill's publication, and to lay the same before the presbytery within two months. William Fisher—the "Holy Willie" whom the poet had already so severely scourged—was one of the elders chosen, and the ministers satirized in this poem (commencing at stanza sixth) were all against the accused. On 15th July 1789, the committee was formed, and began its work; and at this stage the aid of Burns's pen was lent in favour of M'Gill.]

SONNET ON RECEIVING A FAVOUR.

10 AUG., 1789.

Addressed to ROBERT GRAHAM, Esq. of Fintry.

I CALL no Goddess to inspire my strains,
A fabled Muse may suit a bard that feigns :
Friend of my life ! my ardent spirit burns,
And all the tribute of my heart returns,
For boons accorded, goodness ever new,
The gift still dearer, as the giver you.
Thou orb of day ! thou other paler light !
And all ye many sparkling stars of night !

If aught that giver from my mind efface,
 If I that giver's bounty e'er disgrace,
 Then roll to me along your wand'ring spheres,
 Only to number out a villain's years !
 I lay my hand upon my swelling breast,
 And grateful would, but cannot speak the rest.

[The reader has seen the poet's epistle to Mr Graham, soliciting favour which, now, after a year's waiting, had been granted. That favour consisted in a formal appointment to exercise the duties of an exciseman in the rural district where the poet's farm was situated. However, he does not appear to have entered upon these avocations till the month of November following. The earliest reference to this in his correspondence occurs on the first of that month, when he merely informs Ainslie of the appointment. Writing to Mr Graham on 9th December, he says, "I have found the Excise business go on a great deal smoother with me than I expected, owing a good deal to the generous friendship of Mr Mitchell, my collector, and the kind assistance of Mr Findlater, my supervisor. I dare to be honest, and I feel no labour. Nor do I find my hurried life greatly inimical to my correspondence with the Muses. I take the liberty to enclose you a few bagatelles, all of them the productions of my leisure thoughts in my Excise rides."

EXTEMPORANEOUS EFFUSION

ON BEING APPOINTED TO AN EXCISE DIVISION.

SEARCHING auld wives' barrels,
 Ochon, the day !
 That clarty barm should stain my laurels ;
 But—what'll ye say ?
 These movin' things ca'd wives an' weans,
 Wad move the very hearts o' stanes !

SONG.—WILLIE BREW'D A PECK O' MAUT.

The air is Masterton's, the song mine. The occasion of it was this : Mr William Nicol, of the High School, Edinburgh, during the Autumn vacation being at Moffat, honest Allan (who was at that time on a visit to Dalswinton) and I went to pay Nicol a visit. We had such a joyous meeting that Mr Masterton and I agreed, each in our own way, that we should celebrate the business. (*R. B., Glenriddell notes.*)

O WILLIE brew'd a peck o' maut,
 And Rob and Allan cam to see ;
 Three blyther hearts, that lee-lang night,
 Ye wad na found in Christendie.

Chorus.—We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
 But just a drappie in our ee ;
 The cock may crawl, the day may daw,
 And ay we'll taste the barley bree.

Here are we met, three merry boys,
 Three merry boys I trow are we ;
 And mony a night we've merry been,
 And mony mae we hope to be !
 We are na fou, &c.

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
 That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie ;
 She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
 But, by my sooth, she'll wait a wee !
 We are na fou, &c.

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,
 A cuckold, coward loun is he !
 Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
 He is the King amang us three.
 We are na fou, &c.

Carolina Oliphant (Baroness Nairne), who greatly assisted in the literary department of R. A. Smith's "Scottish Minstrel," in 1824, wrote to Mr Purdie, its publisher, in these words:—"If Mr Purdie will in some way iterate that drinking song of Burns's, the work will do credit to all the parties." Her appeal took effect: the engraved plate was cancelled, and a new one was executed containing some harmless effusion, and this world-famous piece is not to be found in that collection. How would an edition of Burns's songs look without the one in the text? As well might "Auld Langsyne" be withheld. Lady Nairne did not exclude "Auld Langsyne" from that work; but she kept out every allusion to drinking, except the "cup of kindness," which, of course, would be tea, or toast and water.

The High School vacation-period extended from about the 12th of August to the close of September. Nicol's lodging, in the vicinity of Moffat, had

been selected as a central spot in what is now the omnibus road between Moffat and "Tibbie Shiel's" Inn. The place was called "Willie's M". In the neighbourhood was Craigieburn, where Miss Jean Lorimer, one of the poet's later heroines, was born and brought up.

Dr Currie, writing in 1799—just ten years after the incident narrated in the above song—says, "These three honest fellows—all men of uncommon talents—are now all under the turf." In 1821, John Struthers, author of some good verses, produced a very telling sequel to this song, based on a remark of Dr Currie. Its last stanza thus powerfully moralises,—

"Nae mair in learning Willie toils, nor Allan wakes the melting lay,
Nor Rab, wi' fancy-witching wiles, beguiles the hour o' dawning day;
For tho' they were na very fou, that wicked 'wee drap in the e'e'
Has done its turn; untimely now the green grass waves o'er a' the thre

CA' THE YOWES TO THE KNOWES.

This beautiful song is in the true Scotch taste; yet I do not know whether either air or words were in print before.—*R. B., Glenriddell notes.*

Chorus.—Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rowes,
My bonie dearie.

As I gaed down the water-side,
There I met my shepherd lad:
He row'd me sweetly in his plaid,
And ca'd me his dearie.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

Will ye gang down the water-side,
And see the waves sae sweetly glide
Beneath the hazels spreading wide,
The moon it shines fu' clearly.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

Ye sall get gowns and ribbons meet,
Caul-leather shoon upon your feet,
And in my arms thou'lt lie and sleep,
An' ay sall be my dearie.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

If ye'll but stand to what ye've said,
 I'se gang wi' thee, my shepherd lad,
 And ye may row me in your plaid,
 And I sall be your dearie.
 Ca' the yowes, &c.

While waters wimple to the sea,
 While day blinks in the lift sae hie,
 Till clay-cauld death sall blin' my e'e,
 Ye sall be my dearie.
 Ca' the yowes, &c.

The above song was one of the fruits of the poet's visit, at this period, to the pastoral district around Moffat. Mrs Burns used to point out that the end and also the closing stanza of the song are entirely Burns's own, the remainder having been only mended by him.

It may be worthy of mention that while Haydn singled out the "Bra' o' Gala Water" as his favourite among the Scottish airs, our Queen Victoria has indicated her partiality for "Ca' the Yowes.]"

I GAED A WAEFU' GATE YESTREEN.

I GAED a waefu' gate yestreen,
 A gate I fear I'll dearly rue ;
 I gat my death frae twa sweet een,
 Twa lovely een o' bonie blue.
 'Twas not her golden ringlets bright,
 Her lips, like roses wat wi' dew,
 Her heaving bosom, lily-white—
 It was her een sae bonie blue.

She talk'd, she smil'd, my heart she wyl'd ;
 She charm'd my soul I wist na how ;
 And ay the stound, the deadly wound,
 Cam frae her een sae bonie blue.
 But "spare to speak, and spare to speed ;" *
 She'll aiblins † listen to my vow :

A proverbial expression, signifying "have patience."

† perhaps.

Should she refuse, I'll lay my dead
To her twa een sae bonie blue.

[Miss Jeanie Jaffrey, a daughter of the Rev. Andrew Jaffrey, minister of Lochmaben, was the blue-eyed charmer who inspired this favourite song. Dr Currie refers to her, in 1800, as "Mrs R . . . of New York lately of Liverpool." Her husband's name was Renwick, and her position in the chief city of the United States was one of distinguished respectability. Washington Irving was proud of her friendship and society; and some years after her death in October 1850, her memoirs were published, along with a collected volume of her writings.]

HIGHLAND HARRY BACK AGAIN.

The oldest title I ever heard to this air was, "The Highland Water-Farewell to Ireland." The chorus I picked up from an old woman of Dunblane; the rest of the song is mine.—*R. B., Glenriddell notes.*

My Harry was a gallant gay,
Fu' stately strade * he on the plain;
But now he's banish'd far away,
I'll never see him back again.

Chorus.—O for him back again!
O for him back again!
I wad gie a' Knockhaspie's land
For Highland Harry back again.

When a' the lave † gae to their bed,
I wander dowie ‡ up the glen;
I set me down and greet my fill,
And ay I wish him back again.
O for him, &c.

O were some villains hangit high,
And ilka body had their ain!

* strode.

† remainder.

‡ despondingly.

Then I might see the joyfu' sight,
 My Highland Harry back again.
 O for him, &c.

The copy of this song in the Hastie Collection at the British Museum is in Burns's handwriting, and contains two additional stanzas. Several white and Highland subjects are contained in the third volume of the collection, and it is very probable that the presence of Nicol and Masterton at this period would set the poet a-musing in this direction.

The additional verses referred to are as follow :—

Sad was the day and sad the hour
 He left me on his native plain,
 An' rush'd, his sair-wrang'd Prince to join,
 But oh, he ne'er cam back again!
 O for him, &c.

Strong was my Harry's arm in war,
 Unmatch'd on a' Culloden plain;
 But Vengeance mark'd him for his ain,
 For oh, he ne'er cam back again!
 O for him back again!
 The auld Stuarts back again!
 I wad gie a' my faither's land
 To see them a' come back again.]

THE BATTLE OF SHERRAMUIR.

Tune—"The Cameron Rant."

"O CAM ye here the fight to shun,
 Or herd the sheep wi' me, man?
 Or were ye at the Sherra-moor,
 Or did the battle see, man?"
 I saw the battle, sair and tough,
 And reekin-red ran mony a sheugh;*
 My heart, for fear, gaed sough for sough,†
 To hear the thuds, and see the cluds
 O' clans frae woods, in tartan duds,
 Wha glaum'd‡ at kingdoms three, man.
 La, la, la, la, &c.

trench or ditch.

† throb.

‡ grasped by anticipation.

The red-coat lads, wi' black cockauds,
 To meet them were na slaw, man ;
 They rush'd and push'd, and blude outgush'd
 And mony a bouk * did fa', man :
 The great Argyle led on his files,
 I wat they glanc'd for twenty miles ;
 They hough'd † the clans like nine-pin kyles,
 They hack'd and hash'd, while braid-swords clash
 And thro' they dash'd, and hew'd and smash'd,
 Till fey ‡ men died awa, man.
 La, la, la, la, &c.

But had ye seen the philibegs,§
 And skyrin || tartan trews, man ;
 When in the teeth they dar'd our Whigs,
 And covenant Trueblues, man :
 In lines extended lang and large,
 When baig'nets ¶ overpower'd the targe,
 And thousands hasten'd to the charge ;
 Wi' Highland wrath they frae the sheath
 Drew blades o' death, till, out o' breath,
 They fled like frightened dows, man !
 La, la, la, la, &c.

" O how deil, Tam, can that be true ?
 The chase gaed frae the north, man ;
 I saw mysel, they did pursue
 The horseman back to Forth, man ;
 And at Dunblane, in my ain sight,
 They took the brig wi' a' their might,
 And straught to Stirling wing'd their flight :
 But, cursed lot ! the gates were shut ;

* body.
 § kilts.

† hewed in the sinews,
 || party-coloured.

‡ doomed.
 ¶ bayonets.

And mony a huntit poor red-coat,
 For fear amaisit did swarf, * man !
 La, la, la, la, &c.

My sister Kate cam up the gate
 Wi' crowdie † unto me, man ;
 She swoor she saw some rebels run
 To Perth and to Dundee, man ;
 Their left-hand general had nae skill ;
 The Angus lads had nae good will
 That day their neibors' blude to spill ;
 For fear, by foes, that they should lose
 Their cogs o' brose ; they scar'd at blows,
 And hameward fast did flee, man.
 La, la, la, la, &c.

They've lost some gallant gentlemen,
 Among the Highland clans, man !
 I fear my Lord Pannure is slain,
 Or in his en'mies' hands, man,
 Now wad ye sing this double flight,
 Some fell for wrang, and some for right ;
 But mony bade the world gude-night ;
 Say, pell and mell, wi' muskets' knell
 How Tories fell, and Whigs to hell
 Flew off in frightened bands, man !
 La, la, la, la, &c.

his song is a paraphrase of an older ballad by the Rev. John Barclay, founded a religious sect in Edinburgh, called the "Bereans." It is well executed as to deserve to be regarded as an original production. The poet accordingly has affixed his name to it in the *Museum*. The battle of Dunblane, or Sheriff-muir, was fought on 13th November 1715, between the Earl of Mar, for the Chevalier, and the Duke of Argyle, for the Government : both sides claimed the victory, the left wing of either party being routed. Ritson observes, it is very remarkable that the capture of Preston happened on the same day.]

* swoon.

† food, oatmeal porridge.

THE BRAES O' KILLIECRANKIE.

WHARE hae ye been sae braw, lad?
 Whare hae ye been sae brankie,* O?
 Whare hae ye been sae braw, lad?
 Cam ye by Killiecrankie, O?

Chorus.—An ye had been whare I hae been,
 Ye wad na been sae cantie† O;
 An ye had seen what I hae seen,
 I' the Braes o' Killiecrankie, O.

I faught at land, I faught at sea,
 At hame I faught my Auntie, O;
 But I met the devil an' Dundee,
 On the Braes o' Killiecrankie, O.
 An ye had been, &c.

The bauld Pitcur fell in a furr,‡
 An' Clavers gat a clankie,§ O;
 Or I had fed an Athole gled,||
 On the Braes o' Killiecrankie, O.
 An ye had been, &c.

[This production speaks for itself, as being the composition of Burns. His note in the Glenriddell MS. is historical only; "The battle of Killiecrankie was the last stand made by the Clans for James after his abdication. Here the gallant Lord Dundee fell in the moment of victory, and with him fell the hopes of the party. General M'Kay, when he found the Highlanders did not pursue his flying army, said, 'Dundee must be killed, or he never would have overlooked this advantage.' A great stone marks the spot where Dundee fell." The stone here referred to is Druidical, and may have stood there thousands of years before Dundee's time.]

* smart.

† merry.

‡ furrow.

§ rattling hit.

|| kite.

AWA' WHIGS, AWA'.

Chorus.—Awa' Whigs, awa' !
Awa' Whigs, awa' !
Ye're but a pack o' traitor louns,
Ye'll do nae gude at a'.

OUR thrissles flourish'd fresh and fair,
And bonie bloom'd our roses ;
But Whigs cam' like a frost in June,
An' wither'd a' our posies.
Awa' Whigs, &c.

Our ancient crown's fa'en in the dust—
Deil blin' them wi' the stoure o't !
An' write their names in his black beuk,
Wha gae the Whigs the power o't.
Awa' Whigs, &c.

Our sad decay in church and state
Surpasses my describing :
The Whigs cam' o'er us for a curse,
An' we hae done wi' thriving.
Awa' Whigs, &c.

Grim vengeance lang has taen a nap,
But we may see him waukin :
Gude help the day when Royal heads
Are hunted like a maukin !
Awa' Whigs, &c.

[These powerful words display their authorship, although collectors of Jacobite relics, and manufacturers of modern antiques, allege Burns's song to be merely a dressing up of an older lyric which they are unable to produce in print older than the date of this production.]

A WAUKRIFE MINNIE.

I picked up this old song and tune from a country girl in Nithsdale, never met with it elsewhere in Scotland.—*R. B., Glenriddell Notes.*

WHARE are you gaun, my bonie lass,
 Whare are you gaun, my hiney?
 She answered me right saucilie,
 An errand for my minnie.

O whare live ye, my bonie lass,
 O whare live ye, my hiney?
 By yon burnside, gin ye maun ken,
 In a wee house wi' my minnie.

But I foor* up the glen at e'en,
 To see my bonie lassie;
 And lang before the grey morn cam,
 She was na hauf sae saucie.

O weary fa' the waukrife† cock,
 And the foumart‡ lay his crawin!
 He wauken'd the auld wife frae her sleep,
 A wee blink or the dawin.

An angry wife I wat she raise,
 And o'er the bed she brocht her;
 And wi' a meikle hazle rung§
 She made her a weel-pay'd dochter.

O fare thee weel, my bonie lass,
 O fare thee well, my hiney!
 Thou art a gay an' a bonie lass,
 But thou hast a waukrife minnie.||

[Stenhouse assures us that this song is not to be found in any collection prior to the Museum; so we may conclude that only a very small portion if any, was taken down from the "country girl's" singing.]

* went forth.

† watchful.

‡ polecat.

§ stick.

|| mother.

THE CAPTIVE RIBBAND.

DEAR Myra, the captive ribband's mine,
 'Twas all my faithful love could gain ;
 And would you ask me to resign
 The sole reward that crowns my pain?

Go, bid the hero who has run
 Thro' fields of death to gather fame,
 Go, bid him lay his laurels down,
 And all his well-earn'd praise disclaim.

The ribband shall its freedom lose—
 Lose all the bliss it had with you,
 And share the fate I would impose
 On thee, wert thou my captive too.

It shall upon my bosom live,
 Or clasp me in a close embrace ;
 And at its fortune if you grieve,
 Retrieve its doom, and take its place.

Solely on the authority of Mr Stenhouse, the able illustrator of Johnson's Musical Museum, we give the above as a production of Burns. It is not in the Hastie collection of the poet's songs in the British Museum. No marks regarding Burns ever gave greater and wider offence than some words of Sir Walter Scott in the *Quarterly Review*, when he spoke of his "lebeian" spirit, and characterized our national poet as devoid of "that spirit of chivalry which, since the feudal times, has pervaded the higher ranks of European society." Sir Walter would surely have qualified his expressions had the above song been placed in his hands as one of the singer's performances.]

FAREWELL TO THE HIGHLANDS.

FAREWELL to the Highlands, farewell to the north,
 The birth-place of Valour, the country of Worth ;
 Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
 The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Chorus.—My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not
 here,
 My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the
 deer ;
 A-chasing the wild-deer, and following the roe
 My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Farewell to the mountains, high-cover'd with snow,
 Farewell to the straths and green vallies below ;
 Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods,
 Farewell to the torrents and loud pouring floods.
 My heart's in the Highlands, &c.

[The poet, in his Glenriddell notes, tells us that the words which form the chorus of this song are old, and the rest his own composition. Mr C. K. Sharpe, in his additional notes to the Museum, gives what he terms the old words, taken from a stall copy, headed "The Strong Walls of Derry," and he mentions that they were much in favour with Sir Walter Scott, who used to sing a portion of the ballad when called upon for a song. We can imagine how the prudent Sir Walter would warble forth the following lines at the festive board, when he found that "elder's hours" were approaching :—

"There is many a word spoken, but few of the best,
 And he that speaks fairest, lives longest at rest ;
 I speak by experience—my mind serves me so,
 But my heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Chorus.—We'll drink and gae hame, boys, we'll drink and gae hame,
 If we stay ony langer we'll get a bad name,
 We'll get a bad name, sirs! we'll fill oursels fou ;
 And the strong walls of Derry are ill to win through."]]

THE WHISTLE.—A BALLAD.

As the authentic *prose* history of the Whistle is curious, I shall here give it.—In the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland with our James the Sixth, there came over also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great prowess, and a matchless champion of Bacchus. He had a curious ebony ca' or Whistle, which, at the commencement of the orgies, he laid on the table ; and whoever was last able to blow it, every body else being disabled by the potency of the bottle, was to carry off the Whistle as a trophy of victory. The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow

W saw, and several of the petty courts in Germany; and challenged the
S s Bacchanalians to the alternative of trying his prowess, or else ac-
k vledging their inferiority.—After many overthrows on the part of the
S s, the Dane was encountered by Sir Robert Laurie of Maxwellton,
restor of the present worthy baronet of that name: who, after three days
nights' hard contest, left the Scandinavian under the table,

And blew on the Whistle his Requiem shrill.

r Walter, son to Sir Robert before-mentioned, afterwards lost the
Vistle to Walter Riddel of Glenriddell, who had married a sister of Sir
Vter's.—On Friday, the 16th of October, 1790, at Friars-carse, the
Vistle was once more contended for, as related in the ballad, by the
gent Sir Robert Laurie; Robert Riddel, Esq., of Glenriddell, lineal
dendant and representative of Walter Riddel, who won the Whistle, and
whose family it had continued; and Alexander Ferguson, Esq. of Craig-
doch, likewise descended of the great Sir Robert; which last gentleman
eied off the hard-won honours of the field.—*R. B.*

I SING of a Whistle, a Whistle of worth,
I sing of a Whistle, the pride of the North,
Was brought to the court of our good Scottish King,
And long with this Whistle all Scotland shall ring.

Old Loda,¹ still rueing the arm of Fingal,
The god of the bottle sends down from his hall—
"This Whistle's your challenge, to Scotland get o'er,
And drink them to hell, Sir! or ne'er see me more!"

Old poets have sung, and old chronicles tell,
What champions ventur'd, what champions fell:
The son of great Loda was conqueror still,
And blew on the Whistle their requiem shrill.

Till Robert, the lord of the Cairn and the Scaur,
Unmatch'd at the bottle, unconquer'd in war,
He drank his poor god-ship as deep as the sea;
No tide of the Baltic e'er drunker than he.

Thus Robert, victorious, the trophy has gain'd;
Which now in his house has for ages remain'd;

¹ See Ossian's 'Caric-thura.'—*R. B.*

Till three noble chieftains, and all of his blood,
The jovial contest again have renew'd.

Three joyous good fellows, with hearts clear of flaw ;
Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law ;
And trusty Glenriddel, so skill'd in old coins ;
And gallant Sir Robert, deep-read in old wines.

Craigdarroch began, with a tongue smooth as oil,
Desiring Glenriddel to yield up the spoil ;
Or else he would muster the heads of the clan,
And once more, in claret, try which was the man.

"By the gods of the ancients !" Glenriddel replies,
"Before I surrender so glorious a prize,
I'll conjure the ghost of the great Rorie More,¹
And bumper his horn with him twenty times o'er."

Sir Robert, a soldier, no speech would pretend,
But he ne'er turn'd his back on his foe, or his friend ;
Said, "Toss down the Whistle, the prize of the field,"
And, knee-deep in claret, he'd die ere he'd yield.

To the board of Glenriddel our heroes repair,
So noted for drowning of sorrow and care ;
But, for wine and for welcome, not more known to fam'
Than the sense, wit, and taste, of a sweet lovely dame.

A bard was selected to witness the fray,
And tell future ages the feats of the day ;
A Bard who detested all sadness and spleen,
And wish'd that Parnassus a vineyard had been.

The dinner being over, the claret they ply,
And ev'ry new cork is a new spring of joy ;
In the bands of old friendship and kindred so set,
And the bands grew the tighter the more they were wet.

¹ See Johnson's 'Tour in the Hebrides.'—*R. B.*

ay Pleasure ran riot as bumpers ran o'er ;
 right Phœbus ne'er witness'd so joyous a core,
 and vow'd that to leave them he was quite forlorn,
 till Cynthia hinted he'd see them next morn.

ix bottles a-piece had well wore out the night,
 When gallant Sir Robert, to finish the fight,
 turn'd o'er in one bumper a bottle of red,
 and swore 'twas the way that their ancestor did.

hen worthy Glenriddel, so cautious and sage,
 no longer the warfare ungodly would wage ;
 high Ruling Elder to wallow in wine ;
 he left the foul business to folks less divine.

he gallant Sir Robert fought hard to the end ;
 but who can with Fate and quart bumpers contend ?
 though Fate said, a hero should perish in light ;
 so uprose bright Phœbus—and down fell the knight.

Next uprose our Bard, like a prophet in drink :—
 ' Craigdarroch, thou'lt soar when creation shall sink !
 But if thou would flourish immortal in rhyme,
 Come—one bottle more—and have at the sublime !

' Thy line, that have struggled for freedom with Bruce,
 Shall heroes and patriots ever produce :
 So thine be the laurel, and mine be the bay ;
 The field thou hast won, by yon bright god of day ! "

[Besides the explanation given by the Bard himself in his copious head-note, the following interesting document, which had been recovered by Cromek in 1807, will throw light on the incident narrated in the ballad. Captain Patrick Miller, younger of Dalswinton, had in 1793 made application to Mr Ferguson of Craigdarroch (the victor in the contest) for some information concerning the affair, and the annexed memoranda, in the hand-writing of Mr M'Murdo, were forwarded in reply :—

Doquet.

" The original Bett between Sir Robert Laurie and Craigdarroch, for the noted Whistle, which is so much celebrated by Robert Burns's Poem—in which Bett I was named Judge—1789.

The Bett decided at Carse—16th Oct. 1789.

Won by Craigdarroch—he drank upds. of 5 Bottles of Claret.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE WHISTLE.

The Whistle gained by Sir Robert Laurie, (now) in possession of Sir R. Riddel of Glenriddell, is to be ascertained to the heirs of the said Sir R. now existing, being Sir R. L., Mr R. of G., and Mr F. of C.—to be settled under the arbitration of Mr Jn. M'Murdo: the business to be decided at Carse, the 16th of October, 1789.

(Signed) ALEX. FERGUSON

R. LAURIE.

ROBT. RIDDELL

COWHILL, 10th October, 1789.

Jno. M'Murdo accepts as Judge—

Geo. Johnston witness, to be present—

Patrick Miller witness, to be pre. if possible.

Minute of Bett between Sir Robert Laurie and Craigdarroch. 1789."

It thus appears that although Burns, in his capacity of poet laureate at the "mighty claret-shed" at the Carse, describes himself as being present as witness and umpire, these offices were, by formal pre-arrangement assigned to certain neighbouring squires, who doubtless kept to the engagements. The dramatic element is essential to the success of a ball, and Burns—a master of his art—adopted this necessary poetical licence to give graphic reality to his picture; and he has succeeded marvellously:

"Next uprose our Bard, like a prophet in drink," &c.

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

THOU ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,

That lov'st to greet the early morn,

Again thou usher'st in the day

My Mary from my soul was torn.

O Mary! dear departed shade!

Where is thy place of blissful rest?

See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?

Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,

Can I forget the hallow'd grove,

Where, by the winding Ayr, we met,

To live one day of parting love!

Eternity can not efface

Those records dear of transports past,

Thy image at our last embrace,
Ah ! little thought we 'twas our last !

Ayr, gurgling, kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild-woods, thickening green ;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar,
'Twin'd amorous round the raptur'd scene :
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray ;
Till too, too soon, the glowing west,
Proclaim'd the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my men'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser-care ;
Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear,
My Mary ! dear departed shade !
Where is thy place of blissful rest ?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid ?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

In glancing over the correspondence of Burns, year after year from 1786 onwards, it seems as if a cloud had settled down over his soul about the end of each autumn. In his letter to Aiken of that season in 1786, he says "Even in the hour of social mirth, my gaiety is the madness of an intoxicated criminal under the hands of the executioner." Towards the close of 1787 he tells Miss Chalmers that the tints of his mind are "ying with the mid horror preceding a midnight thunderstorm : misfortune, bodily constitution, hell, and myself have formed a quadruple alliance to guarantee" such horrors. About the same period in 1788, he is gloomy again, and thus writes to Mrs Dunlop after his first six months' farming at Ellisland : "If miry ridges and ditty dunghills are to engross the best part of the functions of my soul immortal, I had better been a rook or magpie at once, and then I should not have been plagued with any ideas superior to breaking rods and picking up grubs ; not to mention barn-cocks and mallards—creatures with which I could almost exchange lives at any time." In the year following, just after the solemn verses in the text had been composed, we find him in a letter, which quotes one of its stanzas, complaining to Mrs Dunlop that he is "groaning under the miseries of a diseased nervous system. . . . For now near three weeks I have been obliged for a time to give up my Excise books, being scarce able to lift my head, much less to ride once a week over ten muir parishes." Finally, at the same season, three years thereafter, when he had just composed his last saddening

reminiscence of *Highland Mary*, he thus writes to the same lady—"who would wish for many years? What is it but to drag existence, our joys gradually expire and leave us in a night of misery, like the g which blots out the stars, one by one from the face of heaven, and leave without a ray of comfort in the howling waste!"

In some such mood as the above quotations indicate, did Burns at this on the evening before the anniversary of Mary's death, "grow sad and something, and wander solitary on the banks of the Nith and about farmyard in the extremest agitation of mind nearly the whole night." was Cromeek, in 1808, who first narrated the incident, and published the name of the "dear departed shade," which the poet's musing soul addressed. On the lee-side of a cornstack he screened himself from cutting edge of the night wind, and lingered till approaching dawn without the stars, one by one, from the firmament.

Cromeek has mentioned that he derived his information concerning private matters from "several persons, some of them most nearly connected by the ties of relationship with the poet." Poor Mrs Burns, in later life, most unmercifully "interviewed" on such dark points in the history of illustrious husband, and although her knowledge concerning these nearly as limited as that of her persevering questioners, she could not other wise than politely give some response. Her information to Cromeek has truth-like aspect, and the facts need not be questioned; but the embellishments engrafted on the story in the course of twenty years thereafter, given by Lockhart in 1828, belong to the atmosphere of mythology. The following details, also communicated by Cromeek, which refer to the part interview between Burns and Mary, so fondly painted in the text, have since been strongly confirmed by recovery of the pocket-bible presented to her by the poet on the occasion:—"This adieu was performed with those simple and striking ceremonials which rustic sentiment has devised to prolong tender emotions, and to inspire awe. The lovers stood on each side of a small purling brook; they laved their hands in its limpid stream, and holding a bible between them, pronounced their vows to be faithful to each other. They parted—never to meet again!"

EPISTLE TO DR BLACKLOCK.

Ellisland, 21st Oct., 1788

Wow, but your letter made me vauntie! *

And are ye hale, and weel and cantie? †

I ken'd it still, your wee bit jauntie ‡

Wad bring ye to :

Lord send you ay as weel's I want ye !

And then ye'll do.

* elated.

† merry.

‡ tour.

The ill-thief * blaw the Heron¹ south !
 And never drink be near his drouth !
 He tauld myself by word o' mouth,
 He'd tak my letter ;
 I lippen'd † to the chiel in trouth,
 And bade ‡ nae better.

But aiblins,§ honest Master Heron
 Had, at the time, some dainty fair one
 To ware || his theologic care on,
 And holy study ;
 And tired o' sauls to waste his lear on,
 E'en tried the body.²

But what d'ye think, my trusty fier, ¶
 I'm turn'd a gauger—Peace be here !
 Parnassian queans, I fear, I fear,
 Ye'll now disdain me !
 And then my fifty pounds a year
 Will little gain me.

Ye glaiket,** gleesome dainty damies,
 Wha, by Castalia's wimplin †† streamies,
 Lowp, sing, and lave your pretty limbies,
 Ye ken, ye ken,
 That strang necessity supreme is
 . 'Mang sons o' men.

I hae a wife and twa wee laddies ;
 They maun hae brose and brats ‡‡ o' duddies :§§

* the devil. † trusted. ‡ desired. § perhaps. || spend. ¶ friend.
 * giddy-headed. †† winding. ‡‡ coverings. §§ worn-out clothing.

¹ Robert Heron, author of a History of Scotland, and of a Life of Burns.

² "He ventur'd the soul, and I risk'd the body."—*Jolly Beggars*.

Ye ken yoursels my heart right proud is—

I need na vaunt—

But I'll sned besoms,* thraw saugh woodies,†

Before they want.

Lord help me thro' this warld o' care !

I'm weary sick o't late and air !

Not but I hae a richer share

Than mony ithers ;

But why should ae man better fare,

And a' men brithers?

Come, Firm Resolve, take thou the van,

Thou stalk o' carl-hemp ‡ in man !

And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan

A lady fair :

Wha does the utmost that he can,

Will whyles § do mair.

But to conclude my silly rhyme

(I'm scant o' verse and scant o' time),

To make a happy fireside clime

To weans and wife,

That's the true pathos and sublime

Of human life.

My compliments to sister Beckie,

And eke the same to honest Lucky ;

I wat she is a daintie chuckie,||

As e'er tread clay ;

And gratefully, my gude auld cockie,

I'm yours for ay.

ROBERT BURNS.

[This friend and correspondent of Burns died on 7th July 1791, and was buried in the ground attached to the old chapel-of-ease in Buccleuch Street, Edinburgh.]

* cut broom besoms. † weave willow baskets. ‡ male-hemp which bears seed.
§ sometimes. || matronly hen.

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE.

My curse upon your venom'd stang,
 That shoots my tortur'd gums alang,
 An' thro' my lug gies sic a twang,
 Wi' gnawing vengeance,
 Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,
 Like racking engines !

When fevers burn, or agues freeze us,
 Rheumatics gnaw, or colics squeeze us,
 Our neibor's sympathy can ease us,
 Wi' pitying moan ;
 But thee—thou hell o' a' diseases—
 They mock our groan.

Adown my beard the slavers trickle,
 I throw¹ the wee stools o'er the mickle,
 While round the fire the giglets * keckle,[†]
 To see me loup,
 An', raving mad, I wish a heckle
 Were in their doup !

In a' the numerous human dools,[‡]
 Ill-hairsts,[§] daft bargains, cutty stools,
 Or worthy frien's rak'd i' the mools, ||—
 Sad sight to see !
 The tricks o' knaves, or fash ¶ o' fools,
 Thou bear'st the gree ! **

Where'er that place be priest's ca' hell,
 Where a' the tones o' misery yell,

* young wantons.

† laugh aloud.

‡ sorrows.

§ harvests.

|| mould, earth.

¶ annoyance.

** pre-eminence.

Cunningham, followed by Chambers, has "kick" instead of "throw."

An' rankèt plagues their numbers tell,
 In dreadfu' raw,
 Thou, TOOTHACHE, surely bear'st the bell,
 Amang them a' !

O thou grim, mischief-making chiel,
 That gars the notes o' discord squeel,
 Till daft mankind aft dance a reel
 In gore, a shoe-thick,
 Gie a' the faes o' SCOTLAND'S weal
 A towmond's toothache !

[Sir G. Campbell of Blythswood possesses a copy of the Kilmarnock edition (1786), with this poem among others inscribed in Burns's handwriting on its fly-leaves.]

THE FIVE CARLINS,

AN ELECTION BALLAD.

Tune.—"Chevy Chase."

THERE was ² five Carlins * in the South,
 They fell upon a scheme,
 To send a lad ³ to London town,
 To bring them tidings hame.

Nor only bring them tidings hame,
 But do their errands there,
 And aiblins † gowd and honor baith
 Might be that laddie's share.

There was Maggy by the banks o' Nith,⁴
 A dame wi' pride enough ;

* old wives. Carline is the female of "carle," an old man. † possibly

¹ The Five Dumfries Boroughs.

² Lockhart and others print "were;" but "was" is the author's word.

³ A member of Parliament.

⁴ Dumfries.

And Marjory o' the mony Lochs,¹
A Carlin auld and teugh.

And blinkin Bess of Annandale,
That dwelt near Solway-side ;²
And whisky Jean, that took her gill,
In Galloway sae wide.³

And black Joan, frae Crichton Peel,⁴
O' gipsy kith an' kin ;
Five wighter ‡ Carlins were na found
The South countrie within.

To send a lad to London town,
They met upon a day ;
And mony a knight, and mony a laird,
This errand fain wad gae.

O mony a knight, and mony a laird,
This errand fain wad gae ;
But nae ain could their fancy please,
O ne'er a ane but twae.

The first ane was a belted Knight,
Bred of a Border band ;⁵
And he wad gae to London town,
Might nae man him withstand.

And he wad do their errands weel,
And meikle he wad say ;
And ilka ane about the court
Wad bid to him gude-day.

‡ more powerful.

¹ Lochmaben.

² Annan.

³ Kirkcudbright.

⁴ Sanquhar.

⁵ Sir James Johnston of Westerhall.

The neist cam in a Soger youth,¹
Who spak wi' modest grace,
And he wad gae to London Town,
If sae their pleasure was.

He wad na hecht * them courtly gifts,
Nor meikle speech pretend ;
But he wad hecht an honest heart,
Wad ne'er desert his friend.

Then, wham to chuse, and wham refuse,
At strife thir Carlins fell ;
For some had Gentlefolks to please,
And some wad please themsel.

Then out spak mim-mou'd † Meg o' Nith,
And she spak up wi' pride,
And she wad send the Soger youth,
Whatever might betide.

For the auld Gudeman o' London court²
She didna care a pin ;
But she wad send the Soger youth,
To greet his eldest son.³

Then up sprang Bess o' Annandale,
And a deadly aith she's ta'en,
That she wad vote the Border Knight,
Though she should vote her lane.

For far-off fowls hae feathers fair,
And fools o' change are fain ;
But I hae tried the Border Knight,
And I'll try him yet again.

* promise.

† prim-mouthed.

¹ Captain Patrick Millar of Dalswinton.² The King.³ The Prince of Wales.

Says black Joan frae Crichton Peel,
A Carlin stoor* and grim,
The auld Gudeman, and the young Gudeman,
For me may sink or swim ;

For fools will prate o' right or wrang,
While knaves laugh them to scorn ;
But the Soger's friends hae blawn the best,
So he shall bear the horn.

Then whisky Jean spak owre her drink,
Ye weel ken, kimmers a',
The auld Gudeman o' London court,
His back's been at the wa' ;

And mony a friend that kiss'd his caup
Is now a fremit† wight ;
But it's ne'er be said o' whisky Jean,—
We'll send the Border Knight.

Then slow raise Marjory o' the Lochs,
And wrinkled was her brow,
Her ancient weed was russet gray,
Her auld Scots bluid was true ;

There's some great folk set light by me,
I set as light by them ;
But I will send to London town
Wham I like best at hame.

Sae how this weighty plea may end,
Nae mortal wight can tell ;
God grant the King and ilka man
May look weel to himsel.

A contest for the representation in Parliament of the Dumfries group of boroughs commenced in September 1789. The candidates were Sir James

* austere.

† estranged.

Johnston of Westerhall, the previous member, and Captain Patrick M. Younger of Dalswinton, son of the poet's landlord. The great bulk of Burns's friends and patrons belonged to the Whig party; but his detestation of the Duke of Queensberry seems to have biassed his inclinations towards the Tory side in this election, although in the above ballad he affects neutrality.]

ELECTION BALLAD FOR WESTERHA'.

THE Laddies by the banks o' Nith
 Wad trust his Grace wi' a', Jamie;
 But he'll sair * them, as he sair'd * the King—
 Turn tail and rin awa, Jamie.

Chorus.—Up and waur them a', Jamie,
 Up and waur them a';
 The Johnstones hae the guidin o't,
 Ye turncoat Whigs awa!

The day he stude his country's friend,
 Or gied her faes † a claw, ‡ Jamie,
 Or frae puir man a blessin wan,
 That day the Duke ne'er saw, Jamie.
 Up and waur them, &c.

But wha is he, his country's boast?
 Like him there is na twa, Jamie;
 There's no a callant § tents || the kye,
 But kens o' Westerha', Jamie.
 Up and waur them, &c.

To end the wark, here's Whistlebirk,
 Lang may his whistle blaw, Jamie;
 And Maxwell true, o' sterling blue;
 And we'll be Johnstones a', Jamie.
 Up and waur them, &c.

* serve.

† foes.

‡ stroke.

§ boy.

|| herds.

[Here the poet deliberately sides with the Tory candidate, and contrasts his character with that of the Duke of Queensberry. No mention is made of the opposite candidate, who is treated as a mere instrument in the Duke's hands.]

The reference in the closing verse is to Alexander Birtwhistle, provost of Kirkcudbright, a wealthy merchant of much influence, and in politics a Tory.]

PROLOGUE SPOKEN AT THE THEATRE OF DUMFRIES,

ON NEW YEAR'S DAY EVENING, 1790.

"ELLISLAND, Thursday morning. — Sir, Jogging home yesternight, it occurred to me that as your next night is the first night of the New Year, a few lines allusive to the season, by way of Prologue, Interlude, or what you please, might take pretty well. The enclosed verses are very incorrect, because they are almost the first crude suggestions of my Muse, by way of bearing me company in my darkling journey . . . but if they can be of any service to Mr Sutherland and his friends, I shall kiss my hands to my Lady Muse, and own myself much her debtor.—I am, &c.

"ROBERT BURNS."

Inedited letter to Mr George Sutherland, Player, Dumfries.

NO song nor dance I bring from yon great city,
That queens it o'er our taste—the more's the pity :
Tho' by the bye, abroad why will you roam ?
Good sense and taste are natives here at home :
But not for panegyric I appear,
I come to wish you all a good New Year !
Old Father Time deposes me here before ye,
Not for to preach, but tell his simple story :
The sage, grave Ancient cough'd, and bade me say,
"You're one year older this important day,"
If *wiser* too—he hinted some suggestion,
But 'twould be rude, you know, to ask the question ;
And with a would-be-roguish leer and wink,
Said—"Sutherland, in one word, bid them THINK !"

Ye sprightly youths, quite flush with hope and spirit,
Who think to storm the world by dint of merit,

To you the dotard has a deal to say,
In his sly, dry, sententious, proverb way !
He bids you mind, amid your thoughtless rattle,
That the first blow is ever half the battle ;
That tho' some by the skirt may try to snatch him,
Yet by the forelock is the hold to catch him ;
That whether doing, suffering, or forbearing,
You may do miracles by persevering.

Last, tho' not least in love, ye youthful fair,
Angelic forms, high Heaven's peculiar care !
To you old Bald-pate smoothes his wrinkled brow,
And humbly begs you'll mind the important—NOW !
To crown your happiness he asks your leave,
And offers, bliss to give and to receive.

For our sincere, tho' haply weak endeavours,
With grateful pride we own your many favours ;
And howsoe'er our tongues may ill reveal it,
Believe our glowing bosoms truly feel it.

[A letter written by Burns to Lady Glencairn in December, 1789, informs her that he had been turning his thoughts to the drama. "I do not mean (he adds) the stately buskin of the Tragic Muse. Does not your ladyship think that an Edinburgh theatre would be more amused with affectation, folly, and whim of Scottish growth, than manner, which by far the greatest part of the audience can only know at second-hand?"]

SKETCH—NEW YEAR'S DAY [1790].

TO MRS DUNLOP.

THIS day, Time winds th' exhausted chain ;
To run the twelvemonths' length again :
I see the old, bald-pated fellow,
With ardent eyes, complexion sallow,
Adjust the unimpair'd machine,
To wheel the equal, dull routine.

The absent lover, minor heir,
In vain assail him with their prayer ;
Deaf as my friend, he sees them press,
Nor makes the hour one moment less.
Will you (the Major's with the hounds,
The happy tenants share his rounds ;
Coila's fair Rachel's care to-day,
And blooming Keith's engaged with Gray)
From housewife cares a minute borrow,
(That grandchild's cap will do to-morrow,)
And join with me a-moralizing ;
This day's propitious to be wise in.

First, what did yesternight deliver ?
" Another year has gone for ever."
And what is this day's strong suggestion ?
" The passing moment's all we rest on !"
Rest on—for what ? what do we here ?
Or why regard the passing year ?
Will Time, amus'd with proverb'd lore,
Add to our date one minute more ?
A few days may—a few years must—
Repose us in the silent dust.
Then, is it wise to damp our bliss ?
Yes—all such reasonings are amiss !
The voice of Nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies :
That on this frail, uncertain state,
Hang matters of eternal weight :
That future life in worlds unknown
Must take its hue from this alone ;
Whether—as heavenly glory bright,
Or dark as Misery's woeful night.

Since then, my honor'd first of friends,
On this poor being all depends ;

Let us th' important *now* employ,
 And live as those who never die.
 Tho' you, with days and honours crown'd,
 Witness that filial circle round,
 (A sight life's sorrows to repulse,
 A sight pale Envy to convulse),
 Others now claim your chief regard ;
 Yourself, you wait your bright reward.

[Burns seldom allowed a New-year's Day to pass without something from his pen being addressed to Mrs Dunlop. The "Major" referred to in the second paragraph, may have been either Andrew, the fourth, or James, the fifth son of Mrs Dunlop, as both of them attained that rank in the American War.

The "fair Rachel," and the "blooming Keith" of the text were daughter respectively of the patroness of Burns, the one being then engaged with a drawing, or piece of sampler-work, representing "Coila," from *The Vision* and the other being similarly occupied with a subject from Gray's *Elegy*. Mrs Dunlop was apparently a widow when Burns attracted her notice in 1786, and survived, as Dowager Mrs Dunlop of Dunlop, to May 24th, 1815.]

SCOTS PROLOGUE FOR MR SUTHERLAND, ON HIS BENEFIT-NIGHT, AT THE THEATRE, DUMFRIES.

"I was much disappointed, my dear Sir, in wanting your most agreeable company yesterday. However, I heartily pray for good weather next Sunday ; and whatever aerial Being has the guidance of the elements may take any other half dozen of Sundays he pleases, and clothe them with 'vapours and clouds and storms, until he terrify himself at the combustion of his own raising'—I shall see you on Wednesday forenoon. In the greatest hurry, &c.—*R. B.—Monday Morning.*"

WHAT needs this din * about the town o' Lon'on,
 How this new play an' that new sang is comin' ?
 Why is outlandish stuff sae meikle courted ?
 Does nonsense mend, like brandy when imported ?
 Is there nae poet, burning keen for fame,
 Will try to gie us sangs and plays at hame ?

* noise.

For Comedy abroad he need na toil,
A fool and knave are plants of every soil ;
Nor need he hunt as far as Rome or Greece,
To gather matter for a serious piece ;
There's themes enow in Caledonian story,
Would shew the Tragic Muse in a' her glory.--

Is there no daring Bard will rise and tell
How glorious Wallace stood, how—hapless fell?
Where are the Muses fled that could produce
A drama worthy o' the name o' Bruce?
How here, even here, he first unsheath'd the sword
'Gainst mighty England and her guilty Lord ;
And after mony a bloody, deathless doing,
Wrench'd his dear country from the jaws of Ruin !
O for a Shakespeare, or an Otway scene,
To draw the lovely, hapless Scottish Queen !
Vain all th' omnipotence of female charms
'Gainst headlong, ruthless, mad Rebellion's arms :
She fell but fell with spirit truly Roman,
To glut that direst foe—a vengeful woman ;
A woman, (tho' the phrase may seem uncivil,)
As able and as wicked as the Devil !
One Douglas lives in Home's immortal page,
But Douglasses were heroes every age :
And tho' your fathers, prodigal of life,
A Douglas followed to the martial strife,
Perhaps, if bowl's row right, and Right succeeds,
Ye yet may follow where a Douglas leads !

As ye hae generous done, if a' the land
Would take the Muses' servants by the hand ;
Not only hear, but patronize, befriend them,
And where ye justly can commend, commend them ;
And aiblins * when they winna stand the test,

* perhaps.

Wink hard, and say "The folks hae done their best
 Would a' the land do this, then I'll be caition,*
 Ye'll soon hae Poets o' the Scottish nation
 Will gar Fame blaw until her trumpet crack,
 And warsle † Time, an' lay him on his back !

For us and for our Stage, should ony spier, ‡
 "Whase aught thae chieles § maks a' this bustle here?"
 My best leg foremost, I'll set up my brow—
 We have the honor to belong to you !
 We're your ain bairns, e'en guide us as ye like,
 But like good mithers, shore || before ye strike ;
 And gratefu' still, I trust ye'll ever find us,
 For gen'rous patronage, and meikle kindness
 We've got frae a' professions, sorts and ranks :
 God help us ! we're but poor—ye'se get but thanks.

[In a letter to Wm. Nicol, dated 9th Feb. 1789, the poet refers to this Prologue, and its predecessor, thus :—"For these two or three months, on an average, I have not ridden less than 200 miles per week. I have done little in the poetic way ; but I have given Mr Sutherland two Prologues, one of which was delivered last week. Mr Sutherland, the manager, was introduced to me by a friend from Ayr ; and a worthier or cleverer fellow I have rarely met with."]

LINES TO A GENTLEMAN,

WHO HAD SENT THE POET A NEWSPAPER, AND
 OFFERED TO CONTINUE IT FREE OF EXPENSE.

KIND Sir, I've read your paper through,
 And faith, to me, 'twas really new !
 How guessed ye, Sir, what maist I wanted ?
 This mony a day I've grain'd and gaunted, ¶

* security.

§ young fellows.

† wrestle with.

|| give warning.

‡ inquire.

¶ yawped

To ken what French mischief was brewin ;
 Or what the drumlie * Dutch were doin ;
 That vile doup-skelper, Emperor Joseph,
 If Venus yet had got his nose off ;
 Or how the collieshangie † works
 Atween the Russians and the Turks,
 Or if the Swede, before he halt,
 Would play anither Charles the twalt ;¹
 If Denmark, any body spak o't ;
 Or Poland, wha had now the tack ‡ o't :
 How cut-throat Prussian blades were hingin ;
 How libbet § Italy was singin ;
 If Spaniard, Portuguese, or Swiss,
 Were sayin or takin aught amiss ;
 Or how our merry lads at hame,
 In Britain's court kept up the game ;
 How royal George, the Lord leuk o'er him !
 Was managing St Stephens' quorum ;
 If sleekit || Chatham Will was livin,
 Or glaikit ¶ Charlie got his nieve ** in ;
 How daddie Burke the plea was cookin,
 If Warren Hastings' neck was yeukin ; ††
 How cesses, stents, and fees were rax'd,
 Or if bare a—— yet were tax'd ;
 The news o' princes, dukes, and earls,
 Pimps, sharpers, bawds, and opera-girls ;
 If that daft buckie, ‡‡ Geordie Wales,
 Was threshin still at hizzies' tails ;
 Or if he was grown oughtlins douser, §§
 And no a perfect kintra cooser : |||

* muddy.

† contention.

‡ lease.

§ eunuch.

| smooth.

¶ thoughtless.

** fist.

†† itchy.

‡ young buck.

§§ anything more sedate.

||| stallion.

¹ In 1739, Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden was giving some trouble to Russia.

A' this and mair I never heard of ;
 And, but for you, I might despair'd of.
 So, gratefu', back your news I send you,
 And pray a' gude things may attend you !

ELLISLAND, *Monday Morning*, 1790.

[Mr Peter Stuart of the London "Star" was the kind friend to whom this good-humoured and clever effusion was addressed. The contents manifest that Burns was not an inattentive reader of political news. About the year 1838, Mr Daniel Stuart, surviving brother of the editor of the *Star*, published some particulars, to the effect that Burns had been offered £50 per annum by Mr Peter Stuart, for a small weekly contribution to the *Star*, either in prose or verse, which the poet did not see his way to accept.]

ELEGY ON WILLIE NICOL'S MARE.

PEG NICHOLSON was a good bay mare,
 As ever trod on iron ;
 But now she's floating down the Nith,
 And past the mouth o' Cairn.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
 An' rode thro' thick an' thin ;
 But now she's floating down the Nith,
 And wanting even the skin.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
 And ance she bore a priest ;
 But now she's floating down the Nith,
 For Solway fish a feast.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
 An' the priest he rode her sair ;
 And much oppress'd, and bruis'd she was,
 As priest-rid cattle are,—&c. &c.

[These extempore ballad stanzas form the close of a letter from Burns to Willie Nicol, announcing the death of the dominie's mare which had been left at,

out to, Ellisland in an unthriving condition, with a view to be
 a little before being offered for sale at some neighbouring fair.
 The expressions "priest-rid," and "the priest he rode her sair," refer to
 that Nicol, by education, was originally intended for the Church,
 and had been licensed to preach. The name of the mare was in burlesque
 allusion to the insane woman, Margaret Nicholson, who attempted to stab
 George III. in 1786.]

THE GOWDEN LOCKS OF ANNA.

YESTREEN I had a pint o' wine,
 A place where body saw na ;
 Yestreen lay on this breast o' mine
 The gowden locks of Anna.

The hungry Jew in wilderness,
 Rejoicing o'er his manna,
 Was naething to my hiney bliss
 Upon the lips of Anna.

Ye monarchs, take the East and West,
 Frae Indus to Savannah ;
 Gie me, within my straining grasp,
 The melting form of Anna :

There I'll despise Imperial charms,
 An Empress or Sultana,
 While dying raptures, in her arms,
 I give and take wi' Anna !

Awa, thou flaunting God of Day !
 Awa, thou pale Diana !
 I'llk Star, gae hide thy twinkling ray,
 When I'm to meet my Anna !

Come, in thy raven plumage, Night,
 (Sun, Moon, and Stars, withdrawn a' ;))

And bring an angel-pen to write
My transports with my Anna !

POSTSCRIPT.

The Kirk an' State may join an' tell,
To do sic things I maunna :
The Kirk an' State may gae to h—,
And I'll gae to my Anna.

She is the sunshine o' my e'e,
To live but her I canna ;
Had I on earth but wishes three,
The first should be my Anna.

[The heroine of these stanzas was Anne Park—a niece of Mrs H, the landlady of the Globe Tavern, Dumfries. Some years after the death, a sum of four hundred pounds was raised as a provision for illegitimate daughters of Burns, the one being his "dear bought Bess," the other being Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Park, of the Globe Tavern, Dumfries, born 31st March 1791.]

SONG.—I MURDER HATE.

I MURDER hate by flood or field,
Tho' glory's name may screen us ;
In wars at home I'll spend my blood—
Life-giving wars of Venus.
The deities that I adore
Are social Peace and Plenty ;
I'm better pleas'd to make one more,
Than be the death of twenty.

I would not die like Socrates,
For all the fuss of Plato ;
Nor would I with Leonidas,
Nor yet would I with Cato :

The zealots of the Church and State
 Shall ne'er my mortal foes be;
 But let me have bold Zimri's fate,
 Within the arms of Cozbi !¹

The first eight lines of this song were inscribed by Burns with his quill pen on the window-pane of one of the bedrooms of the Globe

Inn, situated in one of the closes of the High Street, marked A. is opposite the head of Assembly Street, and consists of three storeys without a dozen good apartments. It has undergone little change since the days of Burns, the windows—doors, flooring, panelling, stair-railings, remaining almost unaltered. What is termed "Burns's corner" is a snugger on the ground-floor, which is reached by passing through the kitchen. It measures fourteen feet by twelve, is lined with painted panels, and contains an arm-chair, said to be the very one used by the poet when he was in Clarke and he sat there together over their music and whisky.

GUDEWIFE, COUNT THE LAWIN.

GANE is the day, and mirk's the night,
 But we'll ne'er stray for faute o' light;
 Gude ale and brandy's stars and moon,
 And blude-red wine's the rysin sun.

Chorus.—Then gudewife, count the lawin,
 The lawin, the lawin,
 Then gudewife, count the lawin,
 And bring a coggie mair.

There's wealth and ease for gentlemen,
 And simple folk maun fecht and fen';
 But here we're a' in ae accord,
 For ilka man that's drunk's a lord.
 Then gudewife, &c.

My coggie is a haly pool
 That heals the wounds o' care and dool;

¹ *Vide* Numbers, Chap. xxv. verses 8-15.—*R.B.*

And Pleasure is a wanton trout,
 An ye drink it a', ye'll find him out.
 Then gudewife, &c.

[In the second verse the philosophy of Bacchus is exhibited to perfection and Anacreon himself never made a better lyric hit than we have here in stanza third. Burns appreciated its value, and inscribed the latter, with a diamond pen, on one of the window-panes of the Globe Inn, Dumfries.

ELECTION BALLAD,
 AT CLOSE OF THE CONTEST FOR REPRESENTING THE
 DUMFRIES BURGHS, 1790.

ADDRESSED TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY.

FINTRY, my stay in worldly strife,
 Friend o' my muse, friend o' my life,
 Are ye as idle's I am?
 Come then, wi' uncouth kintra fleg,
 O'er Pegasus I'll fling my leg,
 And ye shall see me try him.

But where shall I go rin a ride,
 That I may splatter nane beside?
 I wad na be uncivil:
 In manhood's various paths and ways
 There's ay some doytin * body strays,
 And I ride like the devil.

Thus I break aff wi' a' my birr,†
 An' down yon dark, deep alley spur,
 Where Theologics daunder:‡
 Alas! curst wi' eternal fogs,
 And damn'd in everlasting bogs,
 As sure's the creed I'll blunder!

* bewildered.

† energy.

‡ saunter.

I'll stain a band, or jaup * a gown,
 Or rin my reckless, guilty crown
 Against the haly door :
 Sair do I rue my luckless fate,
 When, as the Muse an' Deil wad hae't,
 I rade that road before.

Suppose I take a spurt, and mix
 Among the wilds o' Politics—
 Elector and elected,
 Where dogs at Court (sad sons of bitches !)
 Septennially a madness touches,
 Till all the land's infected.

All hail ! Drumlanrig's haughty Grace,¹
 Discarded remnant of a race
 Once godlike—great in story ;
 Thy forbears' † virtues all contrasted,
 The very name of Douglas blasted,
 Thine that inverted glory !

Hate, envy, oft the Douglas bore,
 But thou hast superadded more,
 And sunk them in contempt ;
 Follies and crimes have stain'd the name,
 But, Queensberry, thine the virgin claim,
 From aught that's good exempt !

I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig bears,
 Who left the all-important cares
 Of princes, and their darlings :
 And, bent on winning borough towns,
 Came shaking hands wi' wabster-loons, ‡
 And kissing barefit carlins. §

* splash. † forefathers. ‡ weaver-scamps. § women.

¹ William Duke of Queensberry, elevated to Ducal honours in 1773, died
 1 December 1810.

Combustion thro' our boroughs rode,
 Whistling his roaring pack abroad
 Of mad unmuzzled lions ;
 As Queensberry blue and buff¹ unfurl'd,
 And Westerha'² and Hopeton³ hurl'd
 To every Whig defiance.

But cautious Queensberry left the war,
 Th' unmanner'd dust might soil his star,
 Besides, he hated *bleeding* :
 But left behind him heroes bright,
 Heroes in Cæsarean fight,
 Or Ciceronian pleading.

O for a throat like huge Mons-Meg,⁴
 To muster o'er each ardent Whig
 Beneath Drumlanrig's banners ;
 Heroes and heroines commix,
 All in the field of politics,
 To win immortal honors.

M'Murdo⁵ and his lovely spouse,
 (Th' enamour'd laurels kiss her brows !)
 Led on the Loves and Graces :
 She won each gaping burgess' heart,
 While he, sub rosa, played his part
 Among their wives and lasses.

Craigdarroch⁶ led a light-arm'd core,
 Tropes, metaphors, and figures pour,
 Like Hecla streaming thunder :

¹ The Fox or Whig livery. ² The Tory candidate. ³ Earl of Hopetoun.

⁴ A gigantic piece of ordnance at Edinburgh Castle—20 inches diameter.

⁵ John M'Murdo, Esq., the duke's chamberlain, an intimate friend of Burns.

⁶ Fergusson of Craigdarroch champion of "The Whistle."

Glenriddel,¹ skill'd in rusty coins,
 Blew up each Tory's dark designs,
 And bared the treason under.

In either wing two champions fought ;
 Redoubted Staig,² who set at nought
 The wildest savage Tory ;
 And Welsh³ who ne'er yet flinch'd his ground,
 High-way'd his magnum-bonum round
 With Cyclopeian fury.

Miller⁴ brought up th' artillery ranks,
 The many-pounders of the Banks,
 Resistless desolation !
 While Maxwelton,⁵ that baron bold,
 'Mid Lawson's⁶ port entrench'd his hold,
 And threaten'd worse damnation.

To these what Tory hosts oppos'd,
 With these what Tory warriors clos'd,
 Surpasses my describing ;^{*}
 Squadrons, extended long and large,
 With furious speed rush to the charge,
 Like furious devils driving.

What verse can sing, what prose narrate,
 The butcher deeds of bloody Fate,
 'Amid this mighty tulyie !†

* describing.

† struggle.

¹ Robert Riddell, Esq. of Carse.² Provost of Dumfries.³ Sheriff of the county.⁴ Patrick Miller, Esq., father of the Whig candidate, who had been a banker.⁵ Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwelton, M.P.⁶ Lawson, an eminent wine merchant.

Grim Horror girn'd, pale Terror roar'd,
 As Murder at his thrapple* shor'd,†
 And Hell mix'd in the brulye.‡

As Highland craigs by thunder cleft,
 When lightnings fire the stormy lift,
 Hurl down with crashing rattle ;
 As flames among a hundred woods,
 As headlong foam a hundred floods,
 Such is the rage of Battle.

The stubborn Tories dare to die ;
 As soon the rooted oaks would fly
 Before th' approaching fellers :
 The Whigs come on like Ocean's roar,
 When all his wintry billows pour
 Against the Buchan Bullers.¹

Lo, from the shades of Death's deep night,
 Departed Whigs enjoy the fight,
 And think on former daring :
 The muffled murderer of Charles²
 The Magna Charter flag unfurls,
 All deadly gules its bearing.

Nor wanting ghosts of Tory fame ;
 Bold Scrimgeour³ follows gallant Graham ;⁴
 Auld Covenanters shiver—
 Forgive ! forgive ! much-wrong'd Montrose !
 Now Death and Hell engulph thy foes,
 Thou liv'st on high for ever.

* windpipe.

† made an effort.

‡ melee, embroilment.

¹ Remarkable rocky caverns, on the coast near Peterhead.² The executioner of Charles I. was masqued.³ Scrimgeour, Lord Dundee.⁴ Graham, Marquis of Montros

Still o'er the field the combat burns,
The Tories, Whigs, give way by turns ;
 But Fate the word has spoken :
For woman's wit and strength o' man,
Alas ! can do but what they can ;
 The Tory ranks are broken.

O that my een were flowing burns !
My voice, a lioness that mourns
 Her darling cubs' undoing !
That I might greet, that I might cry,
While Tories fall, while Tories fly,
 And furious Whigs pursuing !

What Whig but melts for good Sir James,
Dear to his country, by the names,
 Friend, Patron, Benefactor !
Not Pulteney's wealth can Pulteney save ;
And Hopeton falls, the generous, brave ;
 And Stewart,¹ bold as Hector.

Thou, Pitt, shalt rue this overthrow,
And Thurlow growl a curse of woe,
 And Melville melt in wailing :
Now Fox and Sheridan rejoice,
And Burke shall sing, O Prince, arise !
 Thy power is all prevailing !

For your poor friend, the Bard, afar
He only hears and sees the war,
 A cool spectator purely !
So, when the storm the forest rends,
The robin in the hedge descends,
 And, sober chirps securely.

Now, for my friends' and brethren's sakes,
And for my dear-lov'd Land o' Cakes,
 I pray with holy fire :

¹ Stewart of Hillside.—(R. B.)

Lord, send a rough-shod troop o' Hell
 O'er a' wad Scotland buy or sell,
 To grind them in the mire !

[According to Chambers—"the canvas had been proceeding with excess of vigour all this spring, and when the election at length took place in June the agitation and fervour of the public mind in the district exceeded everything of the kind previously known. The influence of the Duke of Queensberry on the Whig side, proved too much for the merits of the 'good James,' and the dismissal of his Grace from the bed-chamber was revenge on Pitt by the return of Captain Miller." In illustration of verse eighth of the text, the following passage in a letter of Burns will be perused with interest:—"If at any time you expect a field-day in your town—a day when dukes, earls, and knights pay their court to weavers, tailors, and cobblers—I should like to know of it two or three days beforehand. It is not that I care three skips of a cur-dog for the politics, but I should like to see such an exhibition of human nature."

ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON

A GENTLEMAN WHO HELD THE PATENT FOR HIS
 HONOURS IMMEDIATELY FROM ALMIGHTY GOD.

"ELLISLAND, 23rd July 1790.—Do not ask me, my dear Sir, why I have neglected so long to write you. Accuse me of indolence, my line of life is in a hurry, my stars of perverseness—in short, accuse anything but me of forgetfulness. You knew Matthew Henderson. At the time of his death, I composed an elegiac stanza or two, as he was a man I much regarded; but something came in my way, so that the design of an Elegy to his memory gave up. Meeting with the fragment the other day, among some old wasp's papers, I tried to finish the piece, and have this moment put the last hand to it. This I am going to write you is the first fair copy of it. . . . Let me know how you like it. My best compliments to Mrs Cleghorn and family.—I am, most truly, my dear sir, yours, ROBERT BURNS."—*Letter to Mr Robert Cleghorn, Saughton Mills, near Edinburgh.*

"Should the poor be flattered?"—*Shakspeare.*

O DEATH ! thou tyrant fell and bloody !
 The meikle devil wi' a woodie *
 Haur! † thee hame to his black smiddie, ‡
 O'er hurcheon § hides,
 And like stock-fish come o'er his studdie ||
 Wi' thy auld sides !

* gallows-rope. † drag. ‡ smithy. § hedgehog. || anvil.

He's gane, he's gane ! he's frae us torn,
 The ae best fellow e'er was born !
 Thee, Matthew, Nature's sel' shall mourn,
 By wood and wild,
 Where, haply, Pity strays forlorn,
 Frae man exil'd.

Ye hills, near neibours o' the starns,
 That proudly cock your cresting cairns !
 Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing earns,*
 Where Echo slumbers !
 Come join, ye Nature's sturdiest bairns,
 My wailing numbers !

Mourn, ilka grove the cushat † kens !
 Ye haz'ly shaws and briery dens !
 Ye burnies, wimplin down your glens,
 Wi' toddlin din, ‡
 Or foaming, strang, wi' hasty stens, §
 Frae lin to lin. ||

Mourn, little harebells o'er the lea ;
 Ye stately foxgloves, fair to see ;
 Ye woodbines hanging bonilie,
 In scented bow'rs ;
 Ye roses on your thorny tree,
 The first o' flow'rs.

At dawn, when ev'ry grassy blade
 Droops with a diamond at his head,
 At ev'n, when beans their fragrance shed,
 I' th' rustling gale,
 Ye maukins, whiddin ¶ thro' the glade,
 Come join my wail.

* eagles.
 § leaps.

† wood-pigeon.
 || fall to fall.

‡ pacing sound.
 ¶ hares skipping

Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood ;
 Ye grouse that crap the heather bud ;
 Ye curlews, calling thro' a clud ;
 Ye whistling plover ;
 And mourn, ye whirring paitrick brood ;
 He's gane for ever !

Mourn, sooty coots, and speckled teals ;
 Ye fisher herons, watching eels ;
 Ye duck and drake, wi' airy wheels
 Circling the lake ;
 Ye bitterns, till the quagmire reels,
 Rair for his sake.

Mourn, clam'ring craiks* at close o' day,
 'Mang fields o' flow'ring clover gay ;
 And when ye wing your annual way
 Frae our cauld shore,
 Tell thae far warlds wha lies in clay,
 Wham we deplore.

Ye houlets,† frae your ivy bow'r
 In some auld tree, or eldritch‡ tow'r,
 What time the moon, wi' silent glowr,§
 Sets up her horn,
 Wail thro' the dreary midnight hour,
 Till waukrife|| morn !

O rivers, forests, hills, and plains !
 Oft have ye heard my canty strains :
 But now, what else for me remains
 But tales of woe ;
 And frae my een the drapping rains
 Maun ever flow.

* corncraiks, or landrails.

§ stare.

† owls.

|| wakeful.

‡ time-worn.

Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year !
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep* a tear :
Thou, Simmer, while each corny spear
 Shoots up its head,
Thy gay, green, flow'ry tresses shear,
 For him that's dead !

Thou, Autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,
In grief thy fallow mantle tear !
Thou, Winter, hurling thro' the air
 The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world declare
 The worth we've lost !

Mourn him, thou Sun, great source of light !
Mourn, Empress of the silent night !
And you, ye twinkling starnies bright,
 My Matthew mourn !
For through your orbs he's ta'en his flight,
 Ne'er to return.

O Henderson ! the man ! the brother !
And art thou gone, and gone for ever !
And hast thou crost that unknown river,
 Life's dreary bound !
Like thee, where shall I find another,
 The world around !

Go to your sculptur'd tombs, ye Great,
In a' the tinsel trash o' state !
But by thy honest turf I'll wait,
 Thou man of worth !
And weep the ae best fellow's fate
 E'er lay in earth.

THE EPITAPH.

Stop, passenger ! my story's brief,
And truth I shall relate, man ;
I tell nae common tale o' grief,
For Matthew was a great man.

If thou uncommon merit hast,
Yet spurn'd at Fortune's door, man ;
A look of pity hither cast,
For Matthew was a poor man.

If thou a noble sodger art,
That passest by this grave, man ;
There moulders here a gallant heart,
For Matthew was a brave man.

If thou on men, their works and ways,
Canst throw uncommon light, man ;
Here lies wha weel had won thy praise,
For Matthew was a bright man.

If thou, at Friendship's sacred ca',
Wad life itself resign, man ;
Thy sympathetic tear maun fa',
For Matthew was a kind man.

If thou art staunch, without a stain,
Like the unchanging blue, man ;
This was a kinsman o' thy ain,
For Matthew was a true man.

If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire,
And ne'er guid wine did fear, man ;
This was thy billie, dam, and sire,
For Matthew was a queer man.

If ony whiggish, whingin sot,
 To blame poor Matthew dare, man ;
 May dool and sorrow be his lot,
 For Matthew was a rare man.

But now, his radiant course is run,
 For Matthew's was a bright one !
 His soul was like the glorious sun,
 A matchless, Heav'nly light, man.

[Along with other pieces, Burns sent this poem to his correspondent, Dr Moore, and concerning it he remarked—"It is a tribute to the memory of a man I much loved. Poets have in this, the same advantage as Roman Catholics ; they can be of service to their friends after they have passed that burning where all other kindness ceases to be of avail."

The obituary of the Scots Magazine announces Henderson's demise on 1st November 1788, and he was interred in the venerable Greyfriars' churchyard, near the foot of the ground, close to the west side of Duncan and Macintyre's monument.]

VERSES ON CAPTAIN GROSE,

WRITTEN ON AN ENVELOPE, ENCLOSING A LETTER
 TO HIM.

KEN ye ought o' Captain Grose?—Igo and ago,
 If he's among his friends or foes?—Iram, coram, dago,
 Is he to Abra'm's bosom gane?—Igo and ago,
 Or haudin Sarah by the wame?—Iram, coram, dago.

Is he south or is he north?—Igo and ago,
 Or drownèd in the river Forth?—Iram, coram, dago,
 Is he slain by Hielan' bodies?—Igo and ago,
 And eaten like a wether haggis?—Iram, coram, dago.

Where'er he be, the Lord be near him !—Igo and ago,
 As for the deil, he daur na steer him,—Iram, coram, dago,
 But please transmit th' enclosed letter,—Igo and ago,
 Which will oblige your humble debtor,—Iram, coram,
 dago.

So may ye hae auld stanes in store,—Igo and ago,
 The very stanes that Adam bore—Iram, coram, dago,
 So may ye get in glad possession,—Igo and ago,
 The coins o' Satan's coronation !—Iram coram dago.

[Professor Dugald Stewart had expressed to the poet a desire to be introduced to Grose, and accordingly he wrote to his jolly friend intimating the fact, and letting him know that the Professor's summer residence at Catrath was situated less than a mile from Sorn Castle, which the antiquary proposed visiting. Not knowing the Captain's address, he enclosed a letter to Mr Cardonnel, a brother antiquary resident in Edinburgh, within the envelope, the poet inscribed the verses in the text, which are a parody of a familiar old ditty, beginning :—

“Ken ye ought o' Sir John Malcolm?—Igo and ago,
 If he's a wise man, I mistak him,—Iram, coram, dago.”]

TAM O' SHANTER :

A TALE.

“Of Brownys and of Bogillis full is this Buke.”

GAWIN DOUGLAS.

WHEN chapman billies* leave the street,
 And drouthy neibors, neibors meet ;
 As market days are wearing late,
 An' folk begin to tak the gate ; †
 While we sit bowsing at the nappy,
 An' getting fou and unco happy,
 We think na on the lang Scots miles,
 The mosses, waters, slaps, ‡ and styles,
 That lie between us and our hame,
 Where sits our sulky, sullen dame,
 Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
 Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest TAM O' SHANTER,
 As he frae Ayr ae night did canter :
 (Auld Ayr, whom ne'er a town surpasses,
 For honest men and bonie lasses).

* pedlar fellows.

† road.

‡ narrow openings.



O Tam ! had'st thou but been sae wise,
 As taen thy ain wife Kate's advice !
 She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,*
 A bletherin, blusterin, drunken blellum ; †
 That frae November till October,
 Ae market-day thou was na sober ;
 That ilka melder ‡ wi' the Miller,
 Thou sat as lang as thou had siller ;
 That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on
 The Smith and thee gat roarin fou on ;
 That at the L—d's house, ev'n on Sunday,
 Thou drank wi Kirkton¹ Jean till Monday.
 She prophesied, that, late or soon,
 Thou wad be found, deep drown'd in Doon,
 Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
 By Aloway's auld, haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames ! it gars me greet, §
 To think how mony counsels sweet,
 How mony lengthen'd, sage advices,
 The husband frae the wife despises !

But to our tale :—Ae market night,
 Tam had got planted unco right,
 Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
 Wi' reaming swats, || that drank divinely ;
 And at his elbow, Souter Johnie,
 His ancient; trusty, drouthy crony : ¶
 Tam lo'ed him like a very brither ;
 They had been fou for weeks thegither.
 The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter ;
 And ay the ale was growing better :

* wiseacre.

† noisy fellow.

‡ grinding lot.

§ makes me weep.

|| frothing ale.

¶ associate.

¹ Any little village where a parish church is erected is called "the Kirkton."

The Landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi secret favours, sweet and precious :
The Souter tauld his queerest stories ;
The Landlord's laugh was ready chorus :
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy.*
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure :
Kings may be blest but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious !

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed ;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever ;
Or like the Borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place ;
Or like the Rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether Time nor Tide,
The hour approaches Tam maun ride—
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour Tam mounts his beast in ;
And sic a night he took the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last ;
The rattling showers rose on the blast ;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd ;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellow'd :
That night, a child might understand,
The deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his gray meare Meg,
 A better never lifted leg,
 Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
 Despising wind, and rain, and fire ;
 Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonnet,
 Whiles crooning * o'er an auld Scots sonnet,
 Whiles glow'ring † round wi' prudent cares,
 Lest bogles catch him unawares ;
 Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
 Where ghaists and houlets ‡ nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
 Where in the snaw the chapman smoor'd ; §
 And past the birks and meikle stane,
 Where drunken Charlie brak 's neck-bane ;
 And thro' the whins, || and by the cairn, ¶
 Where hunters fand the murder'd bairn ;
 And near the thorn, aboon the well,
 Where Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.
 Before him Doon pours all his floods,
 The doubling storm roars thro' the woods,
 The lightnings flash frae pole to pole,
 Near and more near the thunders roll,
 When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
 Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze,
 Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
 And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn !
 What dangers thou canst make us scorn !
 Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil ;
 Wi' usquabae, we'll face the devil !
 The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
 Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle,

* humming. † staring. ‡ owls. § smothered. || furze. ¶ pile of stones.

But Maggie stood, right sair astonish'd,
 Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
 She ventur'd forward on the light ;
 And, wow ! Tam saw an unco sight !

Warlocks and witches in a dance :
 Nae cotillon, brent* new frae France,
 But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
 Put life and mettle in their heels.
 A winnock-bunker† in the east,
 There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast ;
 A towzie tyke,‡ black, grim, and large,
 To gie them music was his charge :
 He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl,§
 Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.||—
 Coffins stood round, like open presses,
 That shaw'd the Dead in their last dresses ;
 And (by some devilish cantraip¶ sleight)
 Each in its cauld hand held a light,
 By which heroic Tam was able
 To note upon the haly table,
 A murderer's banes, in gibbet-airns ;
 Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns ;
 A thief, new-cutt'd frae a rape,
 Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape ;
 Five tomahawks, wi' blude red-rusted :
 Five scymitars, wi' murder crusted ;
 A garter, which a babe had strangled :
 A knife a father's throat had mangled,
 Whom his ain son of life bereft,
 The grey-hairs yet stack to the heft ;
 Wi' mair of horrible and awefu',
 Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.¹

* bright. † window-seat. ‡ shaggy dog. § scream. || vibrate. ¶ magic.

¹ " Sae, tho' the aith we took was awfu',
 To keep it now appears unlawfu'."—*Ramsay's "Three Bonnets."*

As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd, and curious,
 The mirth and fun grew fast and furious ;
 The Piper loud and louder blew,
 The dancers quick and quicker flew,
 They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,*
 Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,†
 And coost her duddies‡ on the wark,
 And linket at it in her sark !

Now Tam, O Tam ! had thae been queans,
 A' plump and strapping in their teens !
 Their sarks, instead o' creeshie§ flainen,
 Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen !—¹
 Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
 That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
 I wad hae gien them off my hurdies,
 For ae blink o' the bonie burdies !
 But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
 Rigwoodie|| hags wad spean¶ a foal.
 Louping an' flinging on a crummock,* ‡
 I wonder did na turn thy stomach.

But Tam kent what was what fu' brawlie :
 There was ae winsome†† wench and waulie,‡
 That night enlisted in the core,
 Lang after kenn'd on Carrick shore ;
 (For mony a beast to dead she shot,
 And perish'd mony a bonie boat,
 And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
 And held the country-side in fear) ;

* linked.

† perspired and steamed.

‡ cast off her clothing

§ greasy.

|| gallows-worthy.

¶ wean.

** walking-staff.

†† lovesome.

‡‡ strong.

¹ The manufacturer's term for very fine linen, woven in a reed of 1700 divisions.

² "She was a winsome wench and waulie

An' could put on her claes fu' brawlie."—*Ramsay's "Three Bonnets."*

Her cutty * sark, o' Paisley harn,
 That while a lassie she had worn,
 In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
 It was her best, and she was vauntie.
 Ah ! little kent thy reverend grannie,
 That sark she coft † for her wee Nannie,
 Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),
 Wad ever grac'd a dance of witches !

But here my Muse her wing maun cour,
 Sic flights are far beyond her power ;
 To sing how Nannie lap and flang
 (A souple jade she was and strang),
 And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
 And thought his very een enrich'd ;
 Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,
 And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main :
 Till first ae caper, syne anither,
 Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
 And roars out, " Weel done, Cutty-sark !"
 And in a instant all was dark :
 And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
 When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke, ‡
 When plundering herds assail their byke ; §
 As open pussie's || mortal foes,
 When, pop ! she starts before their nose ;
 As eager runs the market-crowd,
 When " Catch the thief !" resounds aloud ;
 So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
 Wi' mony an eldritch ¶ skriech and hollow.

Ah, Tam ! Ah, Tam ! thou'll get thy fairin !
 In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin !

* short cut.

§ nest.

† bought.

|| the hare.

‡ fret.

¶ unearthly.

In vain thy Kate awaits thy coming !
 Kate soon will be a woefu' woman !
 Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
 And win the key-stane o' the brig ;¹
 There, at them thou thy tail may toss,
 A running stream they dare na cross.
 But ere the key-stane she could make,
 The fient a tail she had to shake !
 For Nannie, far before the rest,
 Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
 And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle ; *
 But little wist she Maggie's mettle !
 Ae spring brought off her master hale,
 But left behind her ain grey tail :
 The carlin clautht her by the rump,
 And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
 Each man, and mother's son, take heed :
 Whene'er to Drink you are inclin'd,
 Or Cutty-sarks rin in your mind,
 Think ! ye may buy the joys o'er dear,
 Remember Tam o' Shanter's meare.

A Carrick farmer, who had a scolding wife, and whose names respectively were "Douglas Graham" and "Helen M'Taggart," lived in Burns's time on the little farm of Shanter, near Kirkoswald. Graham occasionally rode Ayr and back, on market days, and having lost his money he probably depended on his wife's credulity by telling her he had been waylaid by robbers, and robbed near Alloway Kirk. It is possible also that when Burns, at the age of sixteen, resided in Kirkoswald for some months, he may have observed the characteristics of Graham and his wife, and even, at Laighpark, conversed with the witching "Kate Steen" and her reverend son. But all such petty details possess little interest for the readers of

* attempt.

It is a well-known fact that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with *bogles*, whatever danger may be in going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back.—R. B.

Tam O' Shanter, the era of whose heroic adventures was far anterior to the existence of any of the poet's contemporaries. The whole interest proceeds from the vivid pictures presented by the narrator of the matchless tale, beginning at the alehouse in Ayr, where the drouthy cronies meet, and finishing at the South end of the auld Brig of Doon, where Tam in safe scampers through the mirk, with his face towards Maybole and Shanter.

The many hundreds of pilgrims who annually visit Alloway Kirk, mu (from the Town of Ayr) approach it by the road leading directly south from the cottage where the poet was born. But in the days when Tam supposed to have had his memorable encounter with the witches, the road lay considerably to the west of the Kirk.]

ON THE BIRTH OF A POSTHUMOUS CHILD

BORN IN PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF FAMILY
DISTRESS.

SWEET flow'ret, pledge o' meikle love,
And ward o' mony a prayer,
What heart o' stane wad thou na move,
Sae helpless, sweet, and fair.

November hirkles o'er the lea,
Chill, on thy lovely form :
And gane, alas ! the shelt'ring tree,
Should shield thee frae the storm.

May He who gives the rain to pour,
And wings the blast to blaw,
Protect thee frae the driving show'r,
The bitter frost and snaw.

May He, the friend o' Woe and Want,
Who heals life's various stounds,
Protect and guard the mother plant,
And heal her cruel wounds.

But late she flourish'd, rooted fast,
Fair on the summer morn,

Now, feeble bends she, in the blast,
Unshelter'd and forlorn.

Blest be thy bloom, thou lovely gem,
Unscath'd by ruffian hand !
And from thee many a parent stem
Arise to deck our land !

[Susan, one of Mrs Dunlop's daughters, had married a French gentleman, named Henri (or Henry), of good birth and fortune, and the couple rented a castle of the Campbells at Loudoun. On 22nd June 1790, the husband died under the effects of a severe cold, leaving his wife pregnant. Such were the circumstances referred to in the author's heading of this poem. The "family distress" however did not end there: Mrs Henri was induced to go to France, taking the child with her, to visit her late husband's relatives. He sickened and died. The child was taken care of by the grandfather, and ultimately became proprietor of the family estates.]

ELEGY ON THE LATE MISS BURNET OF MONBODDO.

LIFE ne'er exulted in so rich a prize,
As Burnet, lovely from her native skies ;
Nor envious death so triumph'd in a blow,
As that which laid th' accomplish'd Burnet low.

Thy form and mind, sweet maid, can I forget?
In richest ore the brightest jewel set !
In thee, high Heaven above was truest shown,
As by His noblest work the Godhead best is known.

In vain ye flaunt in summer's pride, ye groves ;
Thou crystal streamlet with thy flowery shore,
Ye woodland choir that chaunt your idle loves,
Ye cease to charm ; Eliza is no more.

Ye heathy wastes, immix'd with reedy fens ;
Ye mossy streams, with sedge and rushes stor'd ;

Ye rugged cliffs, o'erhanging dreary glens,
To you I fly—ye with my soul accord.

Princes, whose cumb'rous pride was all their worth,
Shall venal lays their pompous exit hail,
And thou, sweet Excellence ! forsake our earth,
And not a Muse with honest grief bewail ?

We saw thee shine in youth and beauty's pride,
And Virtue's light, that beams beyond the spheres
But, like the sun eclips'd at morning tide,
Thou left us, darkling in a world of tears.

The parent's heart that nestled fond in thee,
That heart how sunk, a prey to grief and care ;
So deckt the woodbine sweet yon aged tree ;
So, from it ravish'd, leaves it bleak and bare.

[“ June 17th, 1790, At Braid Farm, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh
Miss Burnet of Monboddoo.”—*Scots Magazine Obituary*.

Elizabeth, who forms the subject of this Elegy, was the youngest
daughter of Lord Monboddoo. She was the reigning beauty and toast
Edinburgh at the time of the poet's first visit there.]

LAMENT OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets o' daisies white
Out o'er the grassy lea :
Now Phœbus cheers the crystal streams,
And glads the azure skies ;
But nought can glad the weary wight
That fast in durance lies.

Now laverocks wake the merry morn.
Aloft on dewy wing ;

The merle, in his noontide bow'r,
Makes woodland echoes ring ;
The mavis wild wi' mony a note,
Sings drowsy day to rest :
In love and freedom they rejoice,
Wi' care nor thrall oppress.

Now blooms the lily by the bank,
The primrose down the brae ;
The hawthorn's budding in the glen,
And milk-white is the slae :
The meanest hind in fair Scotland
May rove thae sweets amang ;
But I, the Queen of a' Scotland,
Maun lie in prison strang.

I was the Queen o' bonie France.
Where happy I hae been ;
Fu' lightly rase I in the morn,
As blythe lay down at e'en :
And I'm the sov'reign of Scotland,
And mony a traitor there ;
Yet here I lie in foreign bands,
And never-ending care.

But as for thee, thou false woman,
My sister and my fae,
Grim Vengeance yet shall whet a sword
That thro' thy soul shall gae :
The weeping blood in woman's breast
Was never known to thee ;
Nor th' balm that drops on wounds of woe
Frae woman's pitying e'e.

My son ! my son ! may kinder stars
Upon thy fortune shine ;
And may those pleasures gild thy reign,
That ne'er wad blink on mine !

God keep thee frae thy mother's faes,
Or turn their hearts to thee :
And where thou meet'st thy mother's friend,
Remember him for me !

O ! soon, to me, may Summer suns
Nae mair light up the morn !
Nae mair to me the Autumn winds
Wave o'er the yellow corn ?
And, in the narrow house of death,
Let Winter round me rave ;
And the next flow'rs that deck the Spring,
Bloom on my peaceful grave !

[Burns was justly proud of these verses, and in a letter to Mrs Graham of Fintry, remarks thus concerning it, "Whether it is that the story of our Mary Queen of Scots has a peculiar effect on the feelings of a poet, or whether I have in the enclosed ballad succeeded beyond my usual poetical success, I know not, but it has pleased me beyond any effort of my Muse for a good while past."]

THERE'LL NEVER BE PEACE TILL JAMIE COMES HAME.

By yon Castle wa', at the close of the day,
I heard a man sing, tho' his head it was grey ;
And as he was singing, the tears doon came,—
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

The Church is in ruins, the State is in jars,
Delusions, oppressions, and murderous wars,
We dare na weel say't, but we ken wha's to blame,—
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

My seven braw sons for Jamie drew sword,
But now I greet round their green beds in the yerd ;
It brak the sweet heart o' my faithfu' auld dame,—
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

Now life is a burden that bows me down,
 Sin I tint my bairns, and he tint his crown ;
 But till my last moments my words are the same,—
 There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

[On 11th March 1791, the poet transcribed this song in a letter to his friend Alexander Cunningham of Edinburgh, and thus wrote:—"If you take the air and the stanzas hit your fancy, you cannot imagine, my dear friend, how much you would oblige me, if by the charms of your delightful voice you would give my honest effusion to 'the memory of joys that are lost' to the few friends whom you indulge in that pleasure."]

SONG—OUT OVER THE FORTH.

OUT over the Forth, I look to the North ;
 But what is the north and its Highlands to me ?
 The south nor the east gie ease to my breast,
 The far foreign land, or the wide rolling sea.

But I look to the west when I gae to rest,
 That happy my dreams and my slumbers may be ;
 For far in the west lives he I loe best,
 The man that is dear to my babie and me.

[In the same letter to Alexander Cunningham, of 11th March 1791, which contains, "There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame," and "The Banks o' Doon," he transcribes the second stanza of this little song, at the conclusion of his epistle, thus:—Good night to you, and sound be your sleep, and delectable your dreams. Apropos, how do you like this thought in a ballad I have just now on the tapis ?

I look to the west when I gae to rest." &c.]

THE BANKS O' DOON

FIRST VERSION.

"ELLISLAND, 11th March 1791.—I have this evening sketched cut a song which I have a good mind to send you. . . It is intended to be sung to a Strathspey reel of which I am very fond, called in Cumming's Collection

'Ballindalloch's Reel,' and in others, 'Camdeltmore.' It takes three stanza of four lines each, to go through the whole tune."—*Excerpt from a letter to Alexander Cunningham, not hitherto printed in extenso.*

SWEET are the banks—the banks o' Doon,
The spreading flowers are fair,
And everything is blythe and glad,
But I am fu' o' care.
Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true:
Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its Luve,
And sae did I o' mine:
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon its thorny tree;
But my fause Luver staw my rose,
And left the thorn wi' me:
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon a morn in June;
And sae I flourished on the morn,
And sae was pu'd or' noon!

THE BANKS O' DOON.

SECOND VERSION.

[March 1791.] "While here I sit, sad and solitary, by the side of a fire in a little country Inn, and drying my wet clothes, in pops a poor fellow of a sodger, and tells me he is going to Ayr. By heavens! say I to myself,

th a tide of good spirits which the magic of that sound—'Auld Toon o'
it,' conjured up, I will send my last song to Mr Ballantine. Here it is."
Letter to John Ballantine, Esq., Ayr.

Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!
Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.
Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its Luve,
And sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon a morn in June;
How like that rose my blooming morn,
Sae darkly set ere noon!
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon its thorny tree;
But my fause Luv' staw my rose,
And left the thorn wi' me.

[The author wrote to Alexander Cunningham, immediately under his first sketch of this song, "If the foregoing piece be worth your strictures, let me have them. For my own part, a thing that I have just composed always appears through a double portion of that partial medium in which an author will ever view his own works. I believe Novelty generally has something in it that inebriates the fancy, and not unfrequently dissipates and fumes away like other intoxications, and leaves the poor patient, as usual, with an aching heart. A striking instance of this might be adduced in the revolution of many a Hymeneal honeymoon."

Cromek has the following note to this song, in the justice of which we fully concur. "The reader will perceive that the measure of this copy of the

'Banks o' bonie Doon,' differs from that which is already published. Burns was obliged to adapt his words to a particular air (different in measure from that they were composed for), and in so doing he lost much of the simplicity and beauty which the song possesses in its present state."

THE BANKS O' DOON.

THIRD VERSION.

YE banks and braes o' bonie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
How can ye chant ye little birds,
And I sae weary fu' o' care!
Thou'll break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its Luve,
And fondly sae did I o' mine;
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree!
And my fause Luver staw my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

[This song, in its earlier form, was transmitted to Johnson to be set to a melody suitable for words in the common ballad-stanza, and Clarke, the musical editor of the *Museum*, having tried the proposed air, suggested the beautiful tune called "The Caledonian Hunt's Delight," as better suiting the sentiment of the words, provided two syllables could be added to every second line. Burns accordingly subjected the words to a slight re-modelling, and again forwarded the song to Johnson, who published it exactly as in the text, allied to the tune which has since become so popular.]

LAMENT FOR JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

THE wind blew hollow frae the hills,
By fits the sun's departing beam
Look'd on the fading yellow woods,
That wav'd o'er Lugar's winding stream:

Beneath a craigy steep, a Bard,
Laden with years and meikle pain,
In loud lament bewail'd his lord,
Whom Death had all untimely ta'en.

He lean'd him to an ancient aik,
Whose trunk was mould'ring down with years ;
His locks were bleachèd white with time,
His hoary cheek was wet wi' tears !
And as he touch'd his trembling harp,
And as he tun'd his doleful sang,
The winds, lamenting thro' their caves,
To Echo bore the notes alang.

" Ye scatter'd birds that faintly sing,
The reliques o' the vernal queire !
Ye woods that shed on a' the winds
The honors o' the aged year !
A few short months, and, glad and gay,
Again ye'll charm the ear and e'e ;
But nocht in all revolving time
Can gladness bring again to me.

" I am a bending aged tree,
That long has stood the wind and rain ;
But now has come a cruel blast,
And my last hold of earth is gane ;
Nae leaf o' mine shall greet the spring,
Nae simmer sun exalt my bloom ;
But I maun lie before the storm,
And others plant them in my room.

" I've seen sae mony changefu' years,
On earth I am a stranger grown :
I wander in the ways of men,
Alike unknowing, and unknown :

Unheard, unpitied, unreliev'd,
I bear alane my lade o' care,
For silent, low, on beds of dust,
Lie a' that would my sorrows share.

“And last, (the sum of a' my griefs !)
My noble master lies in clay ;
The flow'r amang our barons bold,
His country's pride, his country's stay :
In weary being now I pine,
For a' the life of life is dead,
And hope has left my aged ken,
On forward wing for ever fled.

“Awake thy last sad voice, my harp !
The voice of woe and wild despair !
Awake, resound thy latest lay,
Then sleep in silence evermair !
And thou, my last, best, only friend,
That fillest an untimely tomb,
Accept this tribute from the Bard
Thou brought from Fortune's mirkest gloom.

“In Poverty's low barren vale,
Thick mists obscure, involv'd me round ;
Though oft I turn'd the wistful eye,
Nae ray of fame was to be found :
Thou found'st me, like the morning sun
That melts the fogs in limpid air,
The friendless bard and rustic song
Became alike thy fostering care.

“O ! why has worth so short a date,
While villains ripen grey with time ?
Must thou, the noble, gen'rous, great,
Fall in bold manhood's hardy prime !

Why did I live to see that day—
A day to me so full of woe?
O ! had I met the mortal shaft
That laid my benefactor low !

“The bridegroom may forget the bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen ;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been ;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee ;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou hast done for me !”

[On 27th January 1791, died at Falmouth, on his return from Lisbon, whither he had gone in the search of health, James Earl of Glencairn, the amiable friend and patron of Burns. The poet put on mourning for the deceased, and attended his funeral in the family vault at Kilmaurs.]

LINES TO SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD, BART.,

SENT WITH THE FOREGOING POEM.

THOU, who thy honor as thy God rever'st,
Who, save thy mind's reproach, nought earthly fear'st,
To thee this votive offering I impart,
The tearful tribute of a broken heart.
The *Friend* thou valued'st, I, the *Patron* lov'd ;
His worth, his honor, all the world approved :
We'll mourn till we too go as he has gone,
And tread the shadowy path to that dark world unknown.

[As the author has printed these lines in connection with the Lament for Glencairn, we do not separate the pieces, although an interval of several months occurred between the compositions.]

CRAIGIEBURN WOOD.

This song was composed on a passion which a Mr Gillespie, a particular friend of mine, had for a Miss Lorimer, afterwards Mrs Whelpdale. The young lady was born at Craigieburn Wood. The chorus is part of an old foolish ballad.—*R. B., Glenriddell Notes.*

SWEET closes the ev'ning on Craigieburn Wood,
And blythely awaukens the morrow ;
But the pride o' the spring on the Craigieburn Wood
Can yield me nought but sorrow.

Chorus.—Beyond thee, dearie, beyond thee, dearie,
And O to be lying beyond thee !
O sweetly, soundly, weel may he sleep
That's laid in the bed beyond thee !

I see the spreading leaves and flowers,
I hear the wild birds singing ;
But pleasure they hae nane for me,
While care my heart is wringing.
Beyond thee, &c.

I can na tell, I maun na tell,
I daur na for your anger ;
But secret loove will break my heart,
If I conceal it langer.
Beyond thee, &c.

I see thee gracefu', straight and tall,
I see thee sweet and bonie ;
But oh, what will my torment be,
If thou refuse thy Johnie !
Beyond thee, &c.

To see thee in another's arms,
In love to lie and languish,

'Twad be my dead, that will be seen,
 My heart wad burst wi' anguish.
 Beyond thee, &c.

But Jeanie, say thou wilt be mine,
 Say thou loes nane before me ;
 And a' my days o' life to come
 I'll gratefully adore thee.
 Beyond thee, &c.

[Craigieburn is a beautiful locality in the neighbourhood of Moffat, where the parents of Jean Lorimer (afterwards the celebrated "Chloris" of Burns) resided, and where she was born in September 1775. This song is the first of a long series of lyrics which the young woman's charms elicited from the muse of Burns, although, in this instance, it was only a vicarious expression of passion felt by John Gillespie, a brother exciseman of Dumfries. He was smitten by the fascinations of the fair young beauty, and seems to have requested the poet to plead for him in this fashion ; but the wooing was not destined to be successful.]

THE BONIE WEE THING.

Chorus.—Bonie wee thing, cannie wee thing,
 Lovely wee thing, wert thou mine,
 I wad wear thee in my bosom,
 Lest my jewel it should tine.

WISHFULLY I look and languish
 In that bonie face o' thine,
 And my heart it stounds wi' anguish,
 Lest my wee thing be na mine.
 Bonie wee thing, &c.

Wit and Grace, and Love, and Beauty,
 In æ constellation shine ;
 To adore thee is my duty,
 Goddess o' this soul o' mine !
 Bonie wee thing, &c.

[This admired song was, according to the author's own note, composed on his little idol—the 'charming, lovely Davies.' The lady is said to have been of English birth, and a relative of the Glenriddell family. Miss

Deborah Davies—for such was the lady's name—was of small stature, but of exquisite form and beauty, and possessed more than an average share of mental graces. A Captain Delany had made himself agreeable to her by his attentions, and by writing verses to and concerning her. At length they came under marriage-engagements to each other; but delays ensued, and coldness on his part at length became manifest. He joined his regiment abroad, and, with the exception of one formal letter, she never heard from him again. She did not long survive the cruel blow thus inflicted on her hopes and affections. After her death, some verses that she had composed and wrapped round her lover's miniature, were found among her papers. The following extract is worthy of preservation :—

“Next to Thyself, 'tis all on earth, thy ‘Stella’ dear doth hold;
The glass is clouded with my breath, and, as my bosom, cold :
That bosom, which so oft has glowed with Love and Friendship's name,
Where you the seed of Love first sowed, that kindled into flame :
You there neglected let it burn—it seized the vital part,
And left my bosom as an urn, to hold a broken heart.”]

EPIGRAM ON MISS DAVIES,

ON BEING ASKED WHY SHE HAD BEEN FORMED SO
LITTLE, AND MRS A—— SO BIG.

ASK why God made the gem so small?
And why so huge the granite?—
Because God meant mankind should set
That higher value on it.

[The epigram is said to have been uttered, and then inscribed on a window-pane of the principal Inn, at Moffat, on observing Miss Davies ride past in company with a lady of portly dimensions.]

THE CHARMS OF LOVELY DAVIES.

O HOW shall I, unskilfu', try
The poet's occupation?
The tunefu' powers, in happy hours,
That whisper inspiration ;
Even they maun dare an effort mair
Than aught they ever gave us,

Ere they rehearse, in equal verse,
The charms o' lovely Davies.

Each eye, it cheers when she appears,
Like Phœbus in the morning,
When past the shower, and every flower
The garden is adorning :
As the wretch looks o'er Siberia's shore,
When winter-bound the wave is ;
Sae droops our heart, when we maun part
Frae charming, lovely Davies.

Her smile's a gift frae 'boon the lift,
That maks us mair than princes ;
A sceptred hand, a king's command,
Is in her darting glances ;
The man in arms 'gainst female charms,
Even he her willing slave is,
He hugs his chain, and owns the reign
Of conquering, lovely Davies.

My Muse ! to dream of such a theme,
Thy feeble powers surrender :
The eagle's gaze alone surveys
The sun's meridian splendor.
I wad in vain essay the strain,
The deed too daring brave is ;
I'll drap the lyre, and mute admire
The charms o' lovely Davies.

[In sending the lady this piece, Burns seems to have felt a misgiving that its levity might be jarring to her chastened feelings. "So strongly am I interested," he writes, "in Miss Davies's fate and welfare in the serious business of life, amid its chances and changes, that to make her the subject of a silly ballad is downright mockery of their ardent feelings; 'tis like an impertinent jest to a dying friend."]

WHAT CAN A YOUNG LASSIE DO
WI' AN AULD MAN.

WHAT can a young lassie, what shall a young lassie,
What can a young lassie do wi' an auld man?
Bad luck on the penny that tempted my minnie
To sell her puir Jenny for siller an' lan'!
Bad luck on the penny that tempted my minnie
To sell her puir Jenny for siller an' lan'.

He's always compleenin frae mornin to eenin,
He hoasts and he hirples the weary day lang;
He's doylt and he's dozin, his blude it is frozen,—
O dreary's the night wi' a crazy auld man!
He's doylt and he's dozin, his blude it is frozen,
O dreary's the night wi' a crazy auld man.

He hums and he hankers, he frets and he cankers,
I never can please him do a' that I can;
He's peevish an' jealous o' a' the young fellows,—
O dool on the day I met wi' an auld man!
He's peevish an' jealous o' a' the young fellows,
O dool on the day I met wi' an auld man.

My auld auntie Katie upon me taks pity,
I'll do my endeavour to follow her plan;
I'll cross him an' wrack him, until I heartbreak him,
And then his auld brass 'ill buy me a new pan,
I'll cross him an' wrack him, until I heartbreak him,
And then his auld brass 'ill buy me a new pan.

THE POSIE.

O luve will venture in where it daur na weel be seen,
O luve will venture in, where wisdom ance hath been;
But I will down yon river rove, amang the wood sae green,
And a' to pu' a Posie to my ain dear May.

The primrose I will pu', the firstling o' the year,
And I will pu' the pink, the emblem o' my dear ;
For she's the pink o' womankind, and blooms without a
peer,

And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

I'll pu' the budding rose, when Phœbus peeps in view,
For its like a baumy kiss o' her sweet, bonie mou ;
The hyacinth's for constancy wi' its unchanging blue,
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The lily it is pure, and the lily it is fair,
And in her lovely bosom I'll place the lily there ;
The daisy's for simplicity and unaffected air,
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The hawthorn I will pu', wi' its locks o' siller gray,
Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day ;
But the songster's nest within the bush I winna tak away
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The woodbine I will pu', when the e'ening star is near,
And the diamond draps o' dew shall be her een sae clear ;
The violet's for modesty, which weel she fa's to wear,
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

I'll tie the Posie round wi' the silken band o' luve,
And I'll place it in her breast, and I'll swear by a' above,
That to my latest draught o' life the band shall ne'er
remove,

And this will be a Posie to my ain dear May.

[In his Glenriddell notes, the poet mentions that he took down the air and the old words of this song from the singing of a country girl. That "country girl," he afterwards explained to George Thomson, was no other than Mrs Burns, who was very fond of giving vocal effect to the present words with her expressive "woodnote wild." The phrase "my ain dear May," means "my ain dear maid;" May, in short, being a contraction of Mysie or Marian, common in ballad poetry as a name for its heroines—hence the "Maid-Marian" of Robin Hood.]

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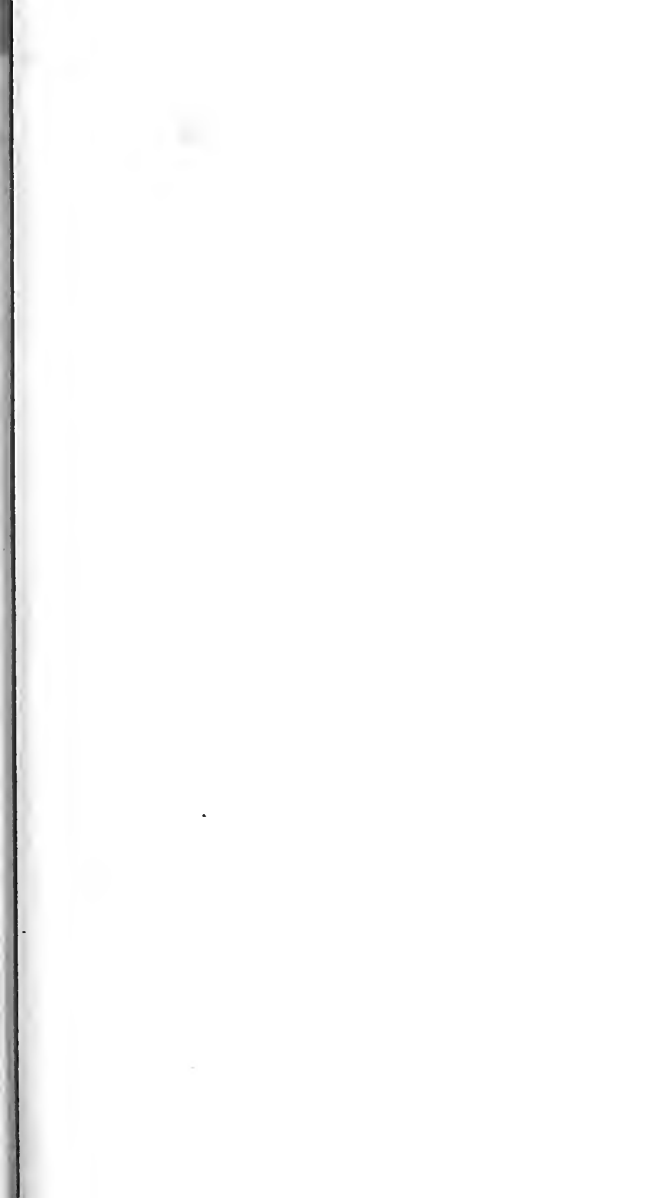
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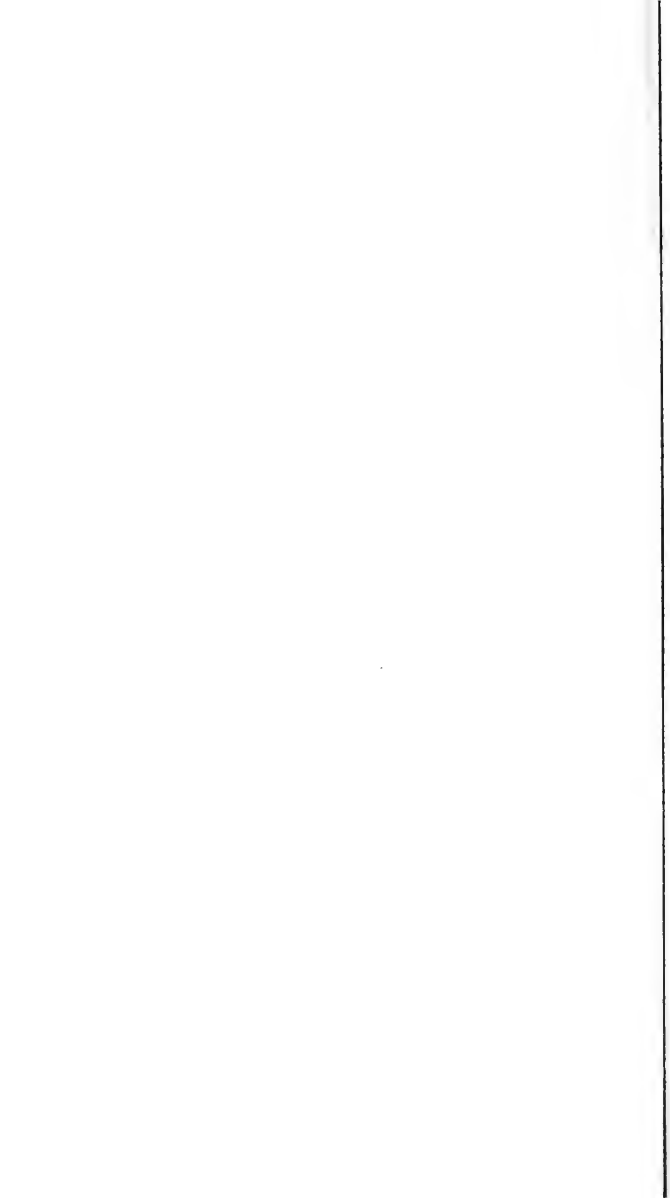
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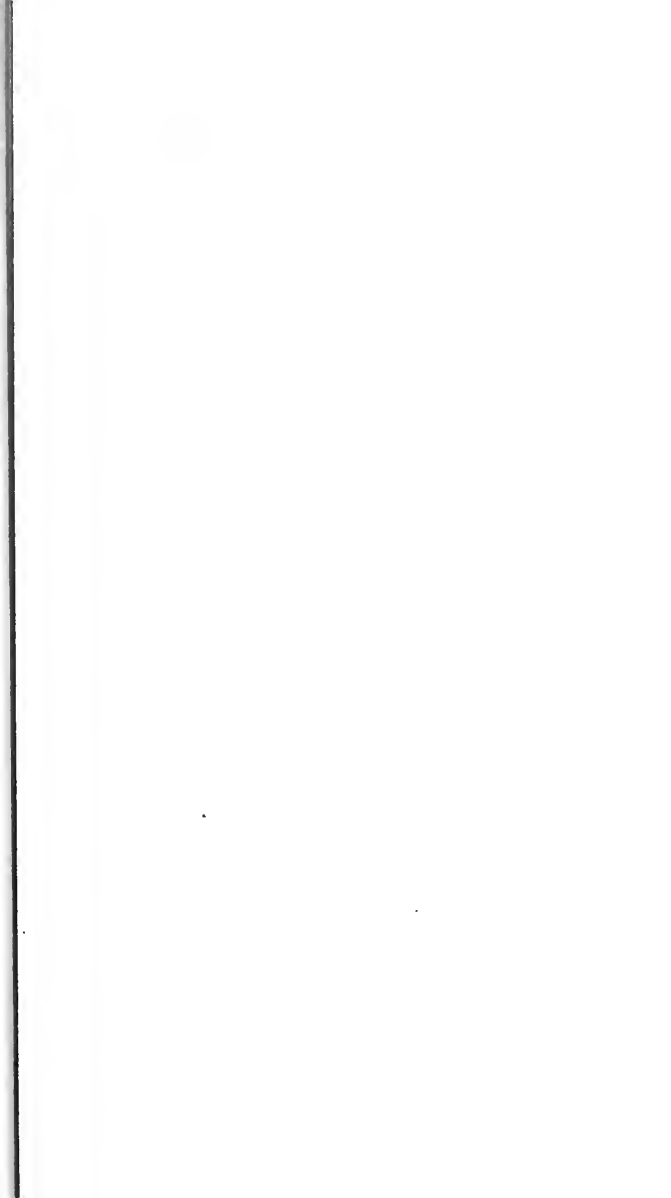
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